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EPISCOPAL CONSECRATIONS WITHOUT PAPAL MANDATE

AN OPEN LETTER OF FATHER BARBARA TO THE SOCIETY OF ST. PIUS X

a review of Catholic teaching

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LETTER OF FATHER BARBARA TO HIS SUBSCRIBERS  
to Announce the End of the Publication of "Fortes in Fide."

Dear Subscribers,

On last December 25th I started the eighty third year of  
my age.

Having been repatriated from the land of Saint Augustine  
(Hippo in Algeria), I settled in the land of St. Martin of

Tours. Like him, "non recuso laborem," but this desire to serve still does not in any way lessen the infirmities which inevitably accompany old age. On the advice of physicians, I must significantly reduce my activities. I have therefore made the decision to terminate the publication of "Fortes in Fide" in French and English. This number 12 (doubled by the supplement: the Letter to the Society St. Pius X), will mark the end of the publication of my review. Founded in 1967, the magazine has been in existence for a quarter of a century.

Despite this decision, I do not have the intention of refraining from all activity. I will continue to say Mass in Tours, to preach retreats to a limited degree, and, to the extent that God permits me, I would like to publish children's books as well as articles for adults on present-day controversies. No longer under the pressure of deadline, I will publish upon completion of my writings

It is no news to you that it is primarily the ignorance of doctrine on the part of practicing Catholics which permitted the success of the subversion in the Church after Vatican II. Continue, therefore, more than ever to be doctrinally well informed and to be apostles of the Truth. The issues of Fortes in Fide are still available in the United States through Mr. Christian, our agent. Re-read them, and become re-acquainted with them. Remember that the charity of the truth is the first charity.

William F. J. CHRISTIAN  
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Concerning the matter of present interest, I especially recommend to you:

SACERDOTIUM and CATHOLIC RESTORATION  
1409 West 14 Mile, Suite 300  
Madison Heights, Michigan 48071-1055  
Telephone: 313-751-7526

Before closing this letter, I extend publicly my fondest gratitude to Mr. Doctor Rama P. Coomaraswamy, M.D., of Greenwich, (Conn.).

In spite of his numerous responsibilities, Dr. Coomaraswamy undertook benevolently the translation of Forts dans la Foi. It is grace to his efforts that our English-speaking readers have been able to read my review.

A sincere thank-you as well to our faithful and benevolent Agent in St. Louis (MO.) in the U.S.A., Mr. William F. J. Christian. The zealousness of he and his wife relieved me of many material worries. I extend to them the acknowledgement of our appreciation.

Let this express my sincere gratitude for their cherished collaboration; with the wish that God, our Savior, reward them for their benevolence.

I will not forget you in my prayers. I have no doubt that you also will pray for me that God grant me the grace of a good death.

I give you my blessing.

Sincerely yours in Jesus, Mary and Joseph,

Father Noel Barbara

#### EDITORIAL

This is the twelfth issue of Fortes in Fide. By way of apology for its tardiness, it comes enlarged with substantial document, the Open Letter from Father Barbara to the Society of St. Pius X. I hope that when you have examined the entire package, you will understand the gravity of the present situation and you will be encouraged to defend our holy faith with even greater strength than before.

The Open Letter is addressed directly to the members of the Fraternity of St. Pius X. It was written for them, but also for all those who hold to similar views which includes the majority of traditional religious teachers. Such individuals, without being aware of it – or at least I hope such is the case – are betraying the cause which they claim to serve. They provide their students with a false understanding of the real nature of the crisis in the Church and they teach a doctrine about the nature of the Magisterium which is not Catholic.

This Letter is much more than a letter. I want the reader to verify the fact that everything I state is justified by the teaching of the Church's Magisterium. He should not allow himself to be entrapped by sentimental arguments such as will certainly be advanced against this work, but should demand of those who would criticize its contents that they ground their attacks on magisterial texts rather than on gratuitous affirmations or by misquoting theologians. (See note 27 of the

Open Letter from Fr. Barbara to the Society of St. Pius X.)

In the French issue of "Fortes in Fide," my Open Letter to the Society of St. Pius X is followed by an appendix which contains the correspondence I have exchanged with the priests and bishops of the Society. The reason I have done this is simple. It is a matter of the salvation of souls and of defending the Church, the nature of which has been shamefully distorted by them. This is why I accuse the priests of the Fraternity of having betrayed the cause [of the Traditional Church] and of having abused and misled those who placed their confidence in them. How can one justify such an accusation when those involved refuse to even discuss the issues?

Under these circumstances I have only one way left open to me: the publication of the correspondence which will allow the reader to judge the issues in detail for himself. When it comes to defending the faith and assuring the salvation of souls, individuals no longer count. The only thing which should guide our proceedings is the clarity of the truth. To act in any other way is to allow the Catholic resistance to die because of silence.

Even the most myopic and those most prejudiced against my point of view cannot but note on reading this correspondence, that it is those whom I criticize who themselves provide the proof of their bad conscience by their systematic refusal to engage in any serious dialogue. With regard to their behavior, how is it possible for us not to evoke the pertinent comment of Our Master: "Every one that doth evil hateth the light and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reprov'd." (John III, 20)

In addition to the Letter to the Society of St. Pius X – is constituted the essential matter of this issue – the reader should not fail to study and to make known the contents: The subject of ordinations performed without papal mandate and of the consecrations conferred by Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc (p. 13 & 27) are burning issues which concern every one of us.

It is more than ever important for our Catholic faithful to be doctrinally formed. More than ever they must intensify their struggle against the propagators of the errors of Vatican II, which is to say John Paul II and the bishops in communion with him.

In order to encourage my readers to put forth the necessary effort which present circumstances impose on them, I will finish this editorial with a text taken from

the Old Testament, and by an issue which one particular aspect of the traditional Mass suggests to me.

#### A PASSAGE TAKEN FROM THE PROPHET AGGEUS (I, verses 2–11)

St. Paul teaches his correspondents in his first Epistle to the Corinthians that all the events reported in the Bible "are figures of things that concern us". The adventures of the people of Israel as told in the words of the Prophet Aggeus do so in a very special manner.

God, having liberated His people from their captivity, brought them back to their own country and returned their possessions to them. In return, He expected them to rebuild the Temple which had been destroyed by His enemies.

Unfortunately, having returned to their own land and having regained their possessions, the people forgot the reason for which God had liberated them. To use the expression of Jehovah, "they deserted the House of God while each of them busied himself with his personal concerns".

After several fruitless attempts to recall them to their duty, Jehovah once again chastised His people. How did He go about doing this? By making all their efforts unproductive. He then said to them: "Set your hearts upon your ways ... You have looked for more and behold it became less, and you brought it home, and I blew it away: And why asked the Lord of Hosts? BECAUSE MY HOUSE IS DESOLATE, AND YOU MAKE HASTE EVERY MAN TO HIS OWN HOUSE. Therefore the heavens over you were stayed from giving dew, and the earth was hindered from yielding her fruits". (I, 10)

Since the Apostle has taught us that these things are told in the manner of figures of things which concern us, let us draw a lesson from these events which will be of profit to us.

Just as the ancient Jews were delivered from captivity by the pure mercy of God, and without any merit on their part, so also, we have been chosen and delivered from the modernist traps of Vatican II. Our Lord made this quite clear: "It is not you who have chosen me, but I who have chosen you". (John XV, 16)

As with the ancient Jews, God has delivered us and given us possession of our goods – the true Mass, the true catechisms, the convents, the centers of traditional worship, the Catholic schools – certainly He wishes that we derive pleasure from them, but we should never forget the reason for

which God has preserved them.

We cannot repeat it too often. God has provided us with all these "goods" and saved us from the Apostasy of Vatican II in order that, like the Jews in the Old Testament, we might also rebuild the House of God which His enemies have destroyed.

What House?

The first time that St. Francis heard Christ say that He chose Francis to "rebuild His Church", St. Francis naturally thought He was referring to the little church of St. Damien which was in ruins. It was only after considerable reflection that St. Francis understood that the House he was to rebuild was the Church established on Peter.

Very well then. It is for this same Church, which is His House, the House of Faith, the Column and Foundation of Truth, that Our Lord has liberated and chosen us. It is in order that we occupy ourselves with this task that he has given us possession of all our goods – the true Mass, true catechisms, Catholic schools and traditional convents, etc.

Entrusted with His Goods, God did not wish to restrict us from enjoying them. But, on the Day of Judgment He will reproach most of us for having forgotten that we were not chosen for that purpose. What He expected of the Jews and they did not do, and what He expects of us, is that we take our part in rebuilding His House. "These things you ought to have done; and not to leave those undone." (Matt. XXIII, 23)

Yes indeed! One should be convinced that the Master has chosen us; He has liberated us and placed in our hands all the goods that we need, but He has done this above all that we might participate in the restoration of His House, of His Church.

WE ARE CONCERNED WITH OUR OWN PERSONAL AFFAIRS WHEN WE PROFIT FROM THE TRUE MASS AND WE LEAVE HIS HOUSE DESERTED, WHEN WE REFUSE TO COMMIT OURSELVES TO THE DEFENSE OF THE FAITH.

But some will claim that only priests are obliged to defend the Faith. It is they who should initiate the struggle by letting their voice be heard; after agreeing about the doctrine, then we will follow and become involved.

Not at all! Certainly, IT IS ABOVE ALL the obligation of priests to defend the faith, but the task is by NO MEANS EXCLUSIVELY THEIRS. The faith should be defended by anyone who possesses it. Anyone who remains indifferent when the faith is

falsified, and who thinks they will have an excuse before the tribunal of God by blaming the conduct of the leaders who failed to provide them with an example, will be condemned along with the leaders who betrayed their function and failed to fulfill their obligations, and this because, like the leaders in question, they have also betrayed their function and failed in their obligations.

Even more important is the fact that an individual who indifferently goes to any mass whatsoever, whether or not it is celebrated "una cum" the "Anti-Christ" is hardly looking to priests for an example to follow.

Let us recognize the fact that most of the resisters behave in the same egoistical manner as did the Jews rebuked by the Prophet, and as such are subject to the same chastisement. God will also remove from them the good things about which they are so complacent. Such then is the fault which these unhappy people are guilty of. They will unquestionably draw the same chastisement on themselves. God will blow on their works and, on them also, nothing will remain, and their sons will curse them ...

#### A SPECIAL ASPECT OF THE TRADITIONAL MASS

The Catholic Mass is the sacrifice of the God-Man accomplished once and for ever on Mount Golgotha and confided to His Spouse the Church in order that she might offer this Sacrifice without cessation to the Father.

Thus the Mass is the Sacrifice of both Christ and the Church. She has been given charge of it, and she alone has the right to offer it up.

In so far as it is the sacrifice of His Well-Beloved Son, the Mass is always acceptable to the Father who never ceases to take all His pleasure in it. BUT IN SO FAR AS THE MASS IS THE SACRIFICE OF THE CHURCH, SUCH IS NOT NECESSARILY THE CASE.

In the sequential prayers of the [traditional] Mass, the celebrant on three different occasions BESEECHES THE FATHER TO RENDER THE SACRIFICE ACCEPTABLE to Him. Why should a Mass not of necessity be acceptable to Him? Let us look to the Missal for an answer:

- After offering the bread and the wine which are about to be consecrated, the priest deeply bows his head and prays to God saying "MAY MY SACRIFICE so be offered up in thy sight this day THAT IT MAY BE PLEASING TO THEE, O LORD GOD."

- Just before starting the Canon, the celebrant turns to the congregation and invites them to augment his prayer, saying "BRETHREN, PRAY THAT MY SACRIFICE AND YOURS TOO MAY BE ACCEPTABLE TO GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY."

- Before blessing and dismissing the faithful at the end of Mass, the priest bows deeply and recites the "Placeat": "May the homage of my bounden duty be pleasing to Thee, O Holy Trinity; AND GRANT THAT THE SACRIFICE which I, though unworthy, have offered in the sight of Thy Majesty, MAY BE ACCEPTABLE TO THEE: AND THROUGH THY MERCY win forgiveness for me and all for whom I have offered it. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen."

Let us remember THAT GOD DOES NOT NECESSARILY FIND EVERY MASS ACCEPTABLE. Even when valid, a Mass can very easily fail to please Him; and even be unacceptable to Him. That such is the case shows us the importance of the issue of "una cum." In my Open Letter to the Society of St. Pius X (p. 101), you will read what I have said in my first question to the editor of "Combat de la Foi." Consider the poor souls in Purgatory, deprived of the benefit of Masses celebrated for them in a rite that God does not find acceptable. This alone allows all of us to understand the importance of offering a sacrifice to the most holy God that is pure and without stain.

In order to close this editorial with a hopeful thought, I shall leave you with the comments of an unknown author on the words of David, a Christmas carol placed on the lips of St. Joseph:

"The Eternal is my infinite light,  
Why should my heart tremble?  
The Eternal is the fortress of my life,  
What can I be afraid of?"

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#### EPISCOPAL CONSECRATIONS without a papal mandate

On June 30, 1988, at Ecône in Switzerland, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, assisted by Bishop Antonio de Castro Mayer, conferred the episcopate without Apostolic Mandate on four of his priests; Fathers Bernard Fellay, Alfonso de Galarreta, Bernard Tissier de Mallerais and Richard Williamson.

On July 28th 1991, in Sao Fidelis, a city in the diocese of Campos, Brazil, Bishop Tissier de Mallerais, assisted by Bishops de Galarreta and Williamson, conferred the episcopate,

once again without Apostolic Mandate, on Father Licinio Rangel.

#### HOW SHOULD WE LOOK UPON SUCH CONSECRATIONS?

Episcopal consecrations without Apostolic Mandates pose a serious problem to the Catholic conscience. Under ordinary circumstances they are seen as specifically schismatic acts. In the Catholic Church one does not conceive of a bishop that is not the head of a particular church or diocese, and only the visible head of the Church, namely the pope, can appoint him to such a position.

This connection between a bishop and his church is so natural that even non-residential bishops (such as those in the Curia, those who are retired, and auxiliary bishops) are always titular heads of an Episcopal See "in partibus infidelium." In other words, in the Church of Christ, one cannot conceive of a bishop without territorial jurisdiction and it is only the pope that can confer such upon him.[1] Under normal circumstances, any consecration performed without an Apostolic Mandate would be considered as a clear-cut schismatic act.[2]

With regard to this, if in virtue of immemorial custom, the patriarchs of the East still retain more extensive powers within their respective jurisdictions, the newly elected are always obliged to announce their election to the Bishop of Rome and to await confirmation which admits them to communion with him.

#### THE CURRENT LAW OF THE CHURCH

The following is the current law of the Church which always regulates the nomination and consecration of bishops.

In her Code of Canon Law No. 953 the Church states that: "Only the Pope has the right of conferring episcopal consecration; it follows that no bishop can do so without having received a commission from the Pope to do so, and following the Roman Pontifical, and without having ascertained by a witness this pontifical mandate which must be shown in writing at the start of the consecration."

Canon 2370 states: "The bishop who, contrary to canon 953, confers episcopal consecration and the assistant bishops or the priests taking their place, as well as the one who receives episcopal consecration without having obtained an Apostolic Mandate are suspended 'ipso jure' until the Holy See has granted a dispensation."

This immemorial practice of the Church was even more

firmly established by a decree of the Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office subsequent to the reception of a special mandate from the Sovereign Pontiff on April 9, 1951. The following is the decree which was promulgated and which has been vigorously enforced ever since: "Every bishop, no matter what dignity and no matter what rite he belongs to, who consecrates a bishop without said individual having been nominated by the Apostolic See, or expressly confirmed by the same authority, and whoever receives such a consecration, even though under serious circumstances, by the very fact incurs excommunication, the lifting of which is reserved exclusively to the Holy See."

Thus it is clear that according to the laws of the Church, consecrations without an Apostolic Mandate are clearly illicit. Under normal circumstances the consecrator, co-consecrators and assistant bishops are all excommunicated and suspended in the eyes of the law.

Normally such is the case. But we are living in abnormal times: we are in a period of crisis, and a crisis without precedent. Indeed, the present circumstance is characterized by the fact that such a situation – namely, the absence of authority on the part of the occupant of the Holy See – has never previously arisen since the beginning of the Church. Under such circumstances does it not become licit as a result of Epikeia to presume that some future pope would provide the Apostolic Mandate? This manner of acting when one cannot wait for Authority [to make its presence felt] has always been acceptable to the Church.

#### EPIKEIA

The Church has always allowed for Epikeia to be used. But when the circumstances are such that the Apostolic Mandate is an obligatory requirement for consecrations, and when this requirement has been reinforced by a special mandate of Pius XII in order for the consecration to be licit, a restrictive interpretation which goes against the letter of the law demands that the reasons one resorts to Epikeia[3] should be truly just and conformable to the thought of the legislator.

#### WHAT THEN ARE THE REASONS?

Anyone who is aware of the nature of the crisis provoked by the popes of Vatican II should have no doubts but that good reasons exist.

First of all, one without which Epikeia could not even be considered, is the absolute impossibility of having access to

an Authority from which one can solicit the desired mandate.

As far as Catholics are concerned, there can be no doubt about the existence of this situation. For them, at least after the promulgation of the Encyclical "Dignitatis Humanae," it is clear that there is no one who is FORMALLY the Pope in the Holy See.

In point of fact the present crisis in the Church – forgive me for repeating myself – is the direct result of the fact that, since the reign of Paul VI, it has been necessary to oppose the formal orders of the popes of Vatican II in order to safeguard one's theological faith and remain within the Catholic Church, which is the Ark of Salvation. This obligation which theological faith imposes on us, at the same time assures us that the popes in question are deprived of all pontifical Authority. They are only MATERIALITER popes.[4]

In the present situation the Holy See is lacking a FORMALITER pope, which is to say, a pope possessing pontifical Authority, capable of refusing or granting an Apostolic Mandate. We see then that the first condition is fulfilled.

The second condition is also fulfilled. In effect, from the human point of view, apart from a miraculous intervention on the part of God, it is absolutely impossible to see any end to this crisis. This impossibility grows in proportion to the official hierarchy's lack of concern about solving the problem that these popes pose for the Catholic conscience; a lack of concern which daily grows more scandalous.[5]

In addition to these two absolutely indispensable conditions, it is necessary to justify such a presumption by the following criteria:

- there should be a grave and urgent need to proceed with these consecrations.

- one should have a moral certitude founded on precise facts that, if a true Pope were to come on the scene, he would unquestionably grant the necessary mandate.

These further conditions are also realized, and realized on two grounds.

- 1) The new sacramental rites, especially those relating to the Mass, the ordination of priests and the consecration of bishops are, to say the least, doubtful.[6] In the not too distant future there will no longer be unquestionably validly ordained bishops to ordain priests and confirm the faithful.

Therefore, in order to assure the continuation of the Priesthood and the Mass in the Church, there is a most urgent need to rapidly consecrate bishops by means of the traditional rites which are unquestionably valid.[7]

2) It is unquestionable, at least for those who along with their Catholic faith possess a feeling and a love for the Church, that a true Pope, a FORMALITER Pope could not but wish one to come to the assistance of all those Christians who, since the so-called "Council of our times," are like a flock of sheep lacking a shepherd. An individual who refused to share the sentiments of Our Lord in the face of the prayers of so many of the faithful, could never be the Vicar of Christ. What is it that the faithful are asking for? Nothing other than the help which was promised them in order for them to gain their salvation: the Mass, unquestionably valid sacramental rites, and true Catholic doctrine.

In order for them to have the true Mass and not the Protestant synaxe of Paul VI; for them to have valid sacraments by means of unquestionably valid rites rather than dubious sacraments confected with ambiguous ceremonies, and for them to have true Catholic doctrine, it is necessary for the faithful to have Catholic priests available to them.

Who other than those validly ordained bishops who are truly Catholic will provide them with such ministers?

And how will we obtain such Catholic bishops if the Vicar of Christ does not give them to us?

Thus it is not temerarious to think, and in fact, it is quite normal to affirm that in the present state of the Church, if there was in Rome a true Pope that one could petition, a Pope possessing the Authority of Peter, he would not only grant the necessary mandate, but would do so in a most expeditious manner.

Imagine a prison camp in China or Russia completely cut off from the rest of the world. The last living bishop is also a prisoner. In order to assure the other prisoners the sacraments after his death he decides to ordain one of the prisoners as a priest and consecrate him a bishop. Unable to petition the Pope, he presumes his agreement. Who would dare to claim that in so acting, this bishop had sinned or had even committed an imprudent act?

Is it not certain that after these prisoners would be liberated and the Pope made aware of the situation, that he would be pleased with both the consecrator and the individual

consecrated? In presuming his mandate in order to act as he did, this bishop has presumed above all upon his charity and Apostolic zeal. Have no doubt about it. Not only would a true Pope be happy to receive such bishops and the individuals they consecrated in communion; but he would hasten to assign them episcopal sees.

The necessary conditions required for licitly invoking Epikeia are completely fulfilled in the present circumstances. The consecrations conferred without any mandate from popes who are only MATERIALITER popes and who have no Authority to confer such, but with the presumption founded on well known facts that a future Vicar of Christ would hasten to confirm their consecration, are in the present state of the Church, perfectly licit.

#### DIFFICULTIES RAISED BY SUCH CONSECRATIONS

Since the usage of Epikeia in the present situation is licit, where do the difficulties which have been raised and still continue to be raised come from?

Some of the problems are a result of the gravely scandalous positions of Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop Tissier de Mallerais. Others derive from the nature of the episcopate and the relation of the episcopate with Authority.

#### THE SCANDALOUS NATURE OF THE LEFEBVRE CONSECRATIONS

The scandalous nature of the Lefebvre consecrations results from the fact that they were conferred without any doctrinal justification and in total contradiction to the laws of the Church.

The very first condition, the "sine qua non" for interpreting the intention of the lawgiver, never existed for them. Not only did they recognize, but they continue to recognize John Paul II as a true Pope, the successor of Peter and the Vicar of Christ; not only have they offered, but they continue on a daily basis to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass "una cum famulo tuo PAPA NOSTRO Joanne-Paulo," not only have they excluded, but they continue to exclude from their Fraternity, priests, brothers, religious and oblates who refuse to recognize him, but they have petitioned and presented their requests to him and have received a formal refusal from him.

Moreover, the reasons advanced by Archbishop Lefebvre and his disciples and supporters are both irrational and downright ridiculous. According to those who believe in their position, as soon as John Paul II accepted the consecrations in

principle, he was no longer opposed to them. It was only on the issue of the date of the consecrations that the Archbishop was forced to break off his dialogue with the "Holy Father." The refusal of Rome did not pertain to the consecrations as such, but only to the date of their performance. This is why the Archbishop had the right to bypass Rome. In other words, as far as the Society of Pius X is concerned (they refuse to accept the principle of non-contradiction – the same person can function as pope and yet not be the Vicar of Christ – they remain obstinate in this clever chimera that so well serves the needs of their cause), Archbishop Lefebvre is fully justified in presuming that "John Paul II, the Catholic pope" would provide them with the mandate which "John Paul II, the antichrist pope" refuses to give them.

These ersatz explanations justify nothing whatsoever. Even the most simple of souls are aware of this. Moreover, apart from admitting that Archbishop Lefebvre did not have any schismatic intention in scorning pontifical Authority, the priests of this Fraternity completely forget – if in fact they ever knew – that the choosing of an episcopal candidate is a disciplinary act. Such decisions are up to the Pope and each time that he makes a decision with regard to such individuals he has to answer to no one except God Himself. They also forget that as long as a nominated candidate is not consecrated, the pope is always free to change his mind, to reject the candidate in question, and to refuse an Apostolic Mandate which is indispensable for the licidity of the consecration. Let me say it again: A POPE WHO IS TRULY POPE, HAS ABSOLUTE POWER IN THE REALM OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION. TO REFUSE TO ACCEPT THIS LEGAL POWER IS TO REFUSE TO ACCEPT HIS UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION.

It is true that the members of this Fraternity profess a very special doctrine with regard to obedience. They have tied themselves to the theory that a circle can be squared. One of them, who is still a district superior, has said to me in writing that "WHEN A SUPERIOR ABUSES HIS AUTHORITY, THE INFERIOR MUST REFUSE OBEDIENCE, HOWEVER, HE SHOULD NOT REFUSE HIS SUBMISSION."

These seemingly intelligent explanations explain nothing. They don't even begin to mitigate for the seriously scandalous nature of the consecrations.

When the Holy Office promulgated the Decree of April, 1951 concerning "the consecration of a bishop without provision" on the orders of Pope Pius XII, the "Nouvelle Revue Theologique" of the following month published a commentary which specifically stated: "such a consecration is not only a

violation of a purely ecclesiastical law, but even more, apart from involving a schismatic attitude, THE ACT IN ITSELF MISREPRESENTS ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY AND MOST CERTAINLY WILL CAUSE GRAVE DAMAGE TO THE SOULS OF THE FAITHFUL."

It is this scandal to the faith which causes many of those who retain a feeling and a love for the Church, a surfeit of revulsion for such consecrations without any Apostolic Mandate.

## THE NATURE OF THE EPISCOPATE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH AUTHORITY

### THE NATURE OF THE EPISCOPATE:

While the order of the second degree – the priesthood – is essentially sacramental, that of the third degree – the episcopate – is hierarchical.

The priesthood was instituted for the preservation and administration of the sacraments, namely the Eucharist, Penance, and Extreme Unction.

To do this validly, the minister must be "stamped" with a sacramental character.

By its nature the episcopacy is primarily directed to the establishment of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. But it is also concerned with the preservation of the sacramental order. Unquestionably, the bishop is normally consecrated to be the head of a local church that the Chief of the Universal Church, the Pope, confides to him for supervision. As I have said before, the union of the bishop with his church is so intrinsically natural that even non-residential bishops (those in the curia, in retirement or auxiliary bishops) are always titular heads of episcopal sees "in partibus infidelium."

But we must not forget that the bishop is also consecrated for the administration of those sacraments which are reserved to him such as Confirmation and the Ordaining of Priests. Even though these are secondary functions, the last one is even more necessary to the life of the Church than his primary function. In fact, the episcopacy is absolutely indispensable for the continuation of the priesthood and as such is the source of the sacramental order. Thus the nature of the episcopate is not exclusively hierarchical.

### THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE EPISCOPATE WITH AUTHORITY

– The priesthood is only dependent upon the Authority for the exercise of its function and for its organization. In case

of necessity, it can be easily replaced by a substitute.

- The episcopate is essentially dependent upon the higher Authority, at least for the establishment of the hierarchical order. This dependence is so absolute that it does not allow for any substitution. Only the Pope can confer on an individual the supervision of a local church and elect said individual as a new member of the Apostolic College of which he, as Pope, is the head.

Epikeia cannot be used as grounds for the consecrating of a bishop unless one can presume an Apostolic Mandate in view of the secondary purpose for which the episcopate was instituted, which is to say, not for the primary end which the bishop performs relative to the establishment of the hierarchy, but only for the secondary end, namely the transmission of that special episcopal character which is the source of the sacramental order.

#### THE ARGUMENT OF THOSE WHO DISAGREE

Without absolutely denying their legitimacy, some partisans of the MATERIALIST Pope (the "Cassiciacum" Thesis) seriously doubt that one can justify episcopal consecrations without a Pontifical Mandate. Their strongest argument rests upon the very nature of the episcopacy which is by its nature dependent upon Higher Authority.[9]

What they are really concerned about is the way in which the nature of the Church is endangered by such consecrations. If we follow their argument properly, in the practical order, these consecrations will destroy the divinely established hierarchical structure of the Church.

#### SOLUTIONS TO THIS DIFFICULTY

In order to respond to their objection, I will distinguish between the primary and the secondary ends of the episcopate.

It is clear that THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE EPISCOPACY IS HIERARCHICAL, "the handing on of Episcopal Orders supports the maintenance of the ecclesiastical hierarchy." [10]

THE SECONDARY END IS SACRAMENTAL. As I have already noted, this sacramental end, while secondary, is also essential to the Episcopacy.

Moreover, these two powers (that of order and of jurisdiction) are not so firmly linked that they have never been separated in a given person. In point of fact, under

normal circumstances, every bishop that is nominated possesses "Episcopal jurisdiction," before he is invested with "Episcopal orders." Thus it is clear that the two powers can be separated in a given individual.

Now it is true that, under ordinary circumstances, one never sees an individual possessing the Episcopacy without any jurisdiction – not even with regard to those "in partibus infidelium." But we are faced with an unprecedented crisis. It follows that it is legitimate, without creating any risk to the divinely established hierarchical structure of the Church, to ordain a bishop exclusively for the secondary end for which the episcopacy was constituted.[11]

OBJECTION: The argument which would justify the consecrations on the presumption of an Apostolic Mandate is only a theological opinion. There is no magisterial decision with regard to the matter. Episcopal ordination is a sacrament and the Church demands with regard to all the sacraments, that one always follow the most certain course. Therefore it is not licit to proceed with a consecration without a proper mandate.

RESPONSE: An Apostolic Mandate is not required for the validity of an Episcopal Ordination. It is only necessary for the licitness of such an act and in order to avoid censures. The objection thus carries no weight. In the present state of the Church, the consecrations conferred by those who hold to the formal vacancy of the Holy See under the conditions which we have specified, are completely valid and very certainly licit.

#### ARE THE "LEFEBVRE" BISHOPS SCHISMATIC?

Are the consecrations in defiance of the law, performed by Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop Tissier de Mallerais who recognize the Pope as the legitimate holder of Authority, schismatic?

For those who adhere to the May 15, 1988 declaration of Archbishop Lefebvre,[12] and for those who recognize John Paul II as the legitimate Pope of the Catholic Church,[13] these consecrations are unquestionably schismatic. For this group of people, the consecrators and those consecrated have incurred the penalty of excommunication which is required by law and they are cut off from ecclesiastical communion.

For such "Catholics," these bishops, and all those who follow them, are excluded from communication with the official church, and as such they remain A SECT ASIDE THE OFFICIAL CHURCH. In fact, they fulfill all the characteristics of a

sect. Just like the schismatics of previous ages, these bishops, consecrated without any mandate, and the members of their Fraternities, the religious and the nuns along with the faithful who support them, publicly scorn the censures passed on them by superiors that they recognize to be legitimate.

#### ARE THEY REALLY SCHISMATIC?

No! Despite appearances to the contrary, they are not such. According to the judgment of the Catholic faith, the Pope exists as an entity which is independent of how any person judges him. In reality, as far as Catholic doctrine is concerned, regardless of what judgment one passes on him, the occupant of the Holy See either is or is not the Pope.

The Catholic faith teaches us that an individual properly elected to the See of Peter becomes truly and really Pope if he is acceptable to Christ, if he is invested with Christ's Authority, or to use the expression of Bishop Guerard des Lauriers, if he possess the quality of "being with." [14]

Such is not the case with the popes of Vatican II.

Obviously, acceptability to Christ and the Pontifical Authority that is implied by "being with" are supernatural realities which do not fall within the realm of human understanding. It is not possible to perceive their presence in an individual, even in an individual who has been elected to the Papacy in a proper manner. But God, who knows everything, knows this also. He knows whether this individual, who is properly elected, is acceptable to Him; He knows whether or not He has invested him with His Authority, and whether or not he is His Vicar.

Since it is theological faith which demands our resistance to these popes of Vatican II, it is also this same faith, which is to say, fidelity to the word of God, which assures us that these "popes" lack that Authority which they should possess. Yes indeed, it is the faith which assures us that they are not acceptable to Christ as His Vicars, and that they do not have the quality of "being with" Him. [15]

As a result, in reality, both the four consecrations conferred by Archbishop Lefebvre, and that conferred on Father Rangel [of Campos in Brazil] by Bishop Tissier de Mallerais, despite appearances to the contrary, are not schismatic. There is no doubt but that they were conferred WITHOUT any Apostolic Mandate, and AGAINST the express will of John Paul II. But this latter individual has no Authority to grant or refuse such mandates. The consecrators and the consecrated, without being

aware of it, have avoided the infamy of schism.

Despite this, the consecrations in question are and remain scandalous. They are in fact very gravely scandalous, for they are scandals against the faith.

Scandal is an act which can cause those who witness it to act sinfully. These consecrations were conferred despite the express refusal of the individual who the consecrators proclaim to be a true Pope of the Catholic Church. In so doing, Archbishop Lefebvre, Bishop Tissier de Mallerais and their entire Fraternity are teaching all the faithful that one can recognize someone as the authentic Vicar of Christ and at the same time knowingly disobey his most specific commands. The Master warned us that "there would be scandals." But let us beware! He also told us that "Unhappy are those through whom such scandals come." (Matt. XVIII, 7)

We can only pray that this "unhappiness" did not become Lefebvre's lot.

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#### THE EPISCOPAL CONSECRATIONS

conferred by

His Excellency Archbishop Peter-Martin Ngo Dinh Thuc

What should we think about them?

As paradoxical as it may seem, the purpose of this article which appears under my signature, is to rehabilitate in the souls of my readers His Excellency, Archbishop Peter-Martin Ngo Dinh Thuc, the elderly Archbishop of Hue in South Vietnam, and to establish the licitness of some of the episcopal consecrations which he performed.

Why do I say "some" and not "all"? Because not everyone he consecrated was Catholic. Now the licitness of an ordination or episcopal consecration depends on the orthodoxy of both the minister and the individual who is receiving the sacrament. I will prove this in the proper place. But among those who were consecrated by this Archbishop, some did not belong to the Catholic Church.

#### I - SOME PRELIMINARY CLARIFICATIONS

In order to avoid subsequent debate, I must start out by clarifying certain points.

## 1 - WITH REGARD TO THE MATTER OF CALUMNY

I swear before God, who will soon be my judge, that I never asked either Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc or any other prelate to consecrate me as a bishop.

As soon as I believed it necessary to take a position in opposition to the consecrations of R. P. Guerard des Lauriers and the Mexican priests Fathers Carmona and Zamora, some parties accused me - forgive me for not being more specific - and spread abroad the rumor that "Father Barbara, having been refused by the elderly Archbishop from Vietnam, from whom he had requested episcopal consecration, had berated the Archbishop. And further, in order to revenge himself, Father Barbara denounced the consecrations of Father Guerard and the Mexican priests."

Against this calumny, for such it is, let me say:

- One can read on page 44[\*] of this issue a copy of the letter which I sent to the elderly prelate by registered mail after I visited him at Toulon on January 6, 1988. The post-office seal confirms the date.

- One can also read on page 46[\*] the testimony of Father Gustave Delmasure who was at that time the cure of Theoule in the diocese of Nice. This Father along with two of his parishioners visited Archbishop Thuc at his home in order to personally question him concerning the matter about which I am accused.

## 2 - MY CREDIBILITY AS A WITNESS

I make the following statement in an attempt to forestall certain criticisms which are bound to be raised:

It is never easy or pleasant to have to publicly admit that one has been mistaken. But for those who are willing to reflect on the matter, such an admission, providing it is without benefit to the individual making it, manifests the honesty of the person and increases his creditability. In the present situation, apart from the humiliation which inevitably accompanies my confession; apart from the legitimate satisfaction which results from repairing an injustice, however involuntary it might be; and apart from better serving the Church, this avowal is of absolutely no benefit to me.

## 3 - MY BREAK WITH R. P. GUERARD DES LAURIERS

This occurred prior to 1980, well before his consecration by Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc.

I had never doubted the exceptional intelligence of the Reverend Father, nor for that matter, the width and depth of his knowledge of the science of theology. On the other hand, what I have always said about this great soul – those that knew him will not disagree with me – was that he suffered from an almost total absence of practical judgment. In an almost habitual fashion he would support and defend the worst side of any issue.

It was this lack of judgment on his part that led me to break off all relations with him.

Thus it can be seen that his Episcopal Consecration had nothing to do with our rupture.

Whatever our misunderstandings may have been, and regardless of his lack of common sense, there was never any question of his being a heretic or a schismatic, much less of his being a formal one. At the time of his Consecration by the elderly Archbishop of Hue, Father Guerard des Lauriers was totally Catholic, and by this I mean, Roman Catholic.

## II – THE PURPOSE FOR MY TESTIMONY: THE ORTHODOXY OF THE CONSECRATIONS PERFORMED BY ARCHBISHOP THUC

The way in which we respond to this issue is of the greatest importance for both the Apostolic Succession and for assuring the faithful about the continued availability of truly Catholic priests that are not guilty of compromising with those who are responsible for destroying the faith.

## I – MY EVOLUTION WITH REGARD TO THIS MATTER

The reason that I aligned myself against the consecrations when I became aware of them was because of the circumstances surrounding the consecrator. He had consecrated the visionaries of Palmar de Troya as well as Jean Laborie, the founder of the sect called "The Latin Church of Toulouse. (Eglise latine de Toulouse)." He had also ordained priests of dubious quality who had been involved in various sects. As a result of these actions I considered the old Archbishop as both a heretic and a schismatic. They raised doubts about the integrity of his faith, and in the absence of any higher Authority constituted a sufficient reason for me to warn my readers about him.

After the publication of my warning in January of 1982, I

no longer concerned myself with this elderly Archbishop or his consecrations.

In 1988, after having once again taken up the task of editing this Review, noting that the direction that the Fraternity of Pius X was taking was creating more and more problems for the consciences of the true resisters, I was led to study the question of heresy and schism in greater detail. I especially reviewed the necessary conditions required by law for imposing the censures which these crimes demand.

I then became aware of the fact that in [our magazine] the "Union pour la Fidelite" we were guilty of creating serious confusion with regard to the judgments expressed about Archbishop Lefebvre and his priests. Unquestionably their behavior and the reasons which they advanced in order to justify their acts were not Catholic. But despite this, they could not be considered FORMAL heretics or schismatics which is what we had previously believed.

What we had written was said in good faith which excuses us from fault, but at the same time, such in no way excuses us from the need to make reparation once we realized we were in error. This is what I have done. I retracted it previously in my "Nouvelle lettre du Pere Barbara."

Subsequently some of my Canadian readers asked me: "Is it true that, after having modified your judgment about Archbishop Lefebvre and his Fraternity, you have also changed your mind with regard to the consecrations conferred by Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc? Would you like to clarify this for us? This is all the more critical for us who live in Quebec as Bishop Carmona is asking us to help support his seminary and Bishop Carmona, as you know, is a Mexican bishop ordained by Archbishop Thuc. Can we help this bishop? Is he truly Catholic?"

This is how I came to reconsider the reasons which had initially led me to label the Archbishop and those whom he had consecrated as schismatic.

It did not take me long to realize that we had committed the same error with regard to him as we had with regard to Archbishop Lefebvre. It is true that Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc had also behaved in a manner that was hardly Catholic. But it is necessary to state that this behavior in no way made him either a heretic or a schismatic, much less a FORMAL one. Like Archbishop Lefebvre, Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc was only guilty of scandal.

Once I realized this, I understood that I was also obliged

to make reparation with regard to him. And this is what I am doing now by publicly defending his orthodoxy.

Why did I not do this sooner? Because his "wild consecrations" have multiplied themselves and have resulted in anarchy. I had to be clear about these in order to complete my documentation and this task was far from easy.

An ancient proverb tells us that "the only people who never make a mistake are those who never do anything." Engaged in the Catholic resistance as I have been since the very beginning, and before any of us were prepared for the task, mistakes were inevitable and in fact occurred. As Scripture advises, let those readers who have never sinned cast the first stone in my direction.

"Errare humanum est" says another proverb, but, we should remember what quickly follows: "perseverare tantum diabolicum." [16]

Thanks to God's grace, I have never been committed to error. Whenever I have found I was wrong, I have quickly escaped, despite the humiliation that making reparation entails.

And so it is that I came to the question of the consecrations performed by Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc. In order that the reader may excuse me, but even more, to aid him to better understand my response, I shall once again draw his attention to a fact of the greatest importance.

## 2 – A FACT OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE

It was a long time after I discovered that the behavior of Archbishop Lefebvre was neither FORMALLY heretical nor FORMALLY schismatic that I came to understand that the same could be said of the behavior of Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc.

I admitted my error about the founder of Econe right away. One can wonder why I have waited until now to do so with regard to the aged Archbishop of Hue. Blessed be divine Providence which wished that matters be disposed of in this way. It was only with regard to Archbishop Lefebvre that I discovered my mistake and retracted it. It was only much later and quite incidentally, because of the need to reply to those who questioned me with regard to the matter, that I acknowledged the same mistake with regard to the Vietnamese prelate.

To help my readers better understand the importance of this remark, I would like to recall a fact. It is that from

the beginning of his resistance, the founder of Econe behaved like both a heretic and a schismatic.

Was it not from the very beginning that Archbishop Lefebvre claimed, contrary to the Catholic faith, that a true pope could publish a "Novus Ordo" for the universal Church which placed the faith of the faithful in danger? Has he not for a long time claimed that within his function of pope, the legitimate successor of Peter can teach errors to the entire Church, and despite doing so remain formally pope?

Lastly, from the very beginning of his resistance he has behaved in a schismatic manner. Is it not true that he has refused [to accept] the New Mass, the new sacraments, religious liberty and all the reforms imposed by those he recognizes as true popes over the Catholic Church, both for himself and his Fraternity? In the practical order, by behaving in this way Archbishop Lefebvre refuses to recognize their jurisdiction over his endeavors. In what way does his acting in this manner differ from that of the Chaldean Patriarch during the reign of Pius IX?[17] Personally, I can see no difference.

Since Archbishop Lefebvre BEHAVED in a way which is both schismatic and heretical from the beginning of his resistance; if one fails to make the important distinction between a FORMAL HERETIC and HERETICAL BEHAVIOR, between FORMAL SCHISM and SCHISMATIC BEHAVIOR, one would conclude that all those who allowed themselves to be ordained by him had incurred the predetermined censures of the Church for "communicatio in sacris" with a non Catholic. What intelligent person would dare to hold such an opinion? I find it necessary to make this remark in order that the reader might remember it when he finds it necessary to consider the orthodoxy of the priests consecrated by Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc.

Where did I go wrong when I said that the founder of Econe was a formal schismatic and a formal heretic? I became confused and failed to distinguish between the HERETIC and HERESY, which is to say that I confused the OBJECTIVE or MATERIAL sin with the SUBJECTIVE or FORMAL sin.

OBJECTIVELY, the behavior of Archbishop Lefebvre and his priests is clearly both schismatic and heretical. But, apart from a personal acknowledgement of the presumed fault, or a declaration by competent Authority such as doesn't exist at this time, no one can declare that either Archbishop Lefebvre or the priests of the Society are FORMALLY and SUBJECTIVELY such. There are in fact serious indications to the contrary. The only judgment we can make with regard to them when we see them behave in this manner and when we listen to their

explanations, is that they are SCANDALOUS AND GIVE SCANDAL TO THE FAITH.

And it was the same effort that we made with regard to Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc. It is true that the reasons we proffered for declaring him a heretic and a schismatic were different than those we advanced with regard to Archbishop Lefebvre. When it came to the elderly Archbishop of Hue, they related, not to his attempts at justifying his actions, but to his compromising with individuals who were members of sects or cults. Moreover, applying a rigorous interpretation of the laws of the Church with regard to "communicatio in divinis cum acatholicis," we committed yet another mistake with regard to him.

We thought that these consecrations, conferred on individuals that were clearly formal heretics and formal schismatics, rendered the person responsible for the consecrations formally schismatic and heretical. It is here that we made our mistake. In effect "communicatio in divinis" does not mean the same in these two situations. Allow me to explain myself. What the Church absolutely prohibits under pain of censure is the communication in the faith of a heretical or schismatic minister. This occurs when a Catholic demands or receives the sacraments from a minister who he knows is not a Catholic.

When a non-Catholic receives the sacraments from a Catholic minister, it is the non-Catholic who participates in the Catholic faith. Under such circumstance there is no censure on the minister. Such was the situation with Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc.

### 3 – AN UNKNOWN FACTOR WITHOUT IMPORTANCE FOR THE MATTER UNDER DISCUSSION

For what reason did Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc confer consecrations on such individuals? Was he misled by them?

No one has been able to adequately explain this to me. But the reader should be aware that, regardless of how legitimate this question is, it is of no importance with regard to the matter under discussion. In effect, even if Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc acted with full knowledge of the reasons, which is to say, with full knowledge that those on whom he imposed his hands were not Catholic – such would unquestionably be a most serious sin – it would not make him a heretic or a schismatic, much less a formal heretic or schismatic. We must not forget that this and only this bears upon the judgment we make with regard to him.

#### 4 - CONCLUSION

From all that I know about the matter, it is clear that up to the time of the consecrations of which I am speaking, Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc:

- never professed any error with regard to the faith which would make him a heretic;
- has never been guilty of schism by contesting the universal jurisdiction of the Pope;
- has never incurred any censures of the law for "communicatio in divinis cum acatholicis;"

whether he be good or bad, he was a bishop of the Holy Roman Catholic Church when he conferred the Episcopacy on R. P. Guerard des Lauriers and on Fathers Carmona and Zamora.

Therefore the judgment which we made about this matter in the "Union pour la Fidelite" was completely wrong and should be retracted. This I have already done and now do so again.

#### III - THE ORTHODOXY OF THESE CONSECRATIONS

Assuming that Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc was Catholic, can we also assume that his consecrations were such?

In order to respond to this question I shall deal with it in three sections relative to the Catholic faith: the CONSECRATOR, the RITE used and the INDIVIDUALS CONSECRATED.

##### THE CONSECRATOR

In every problem, and above all in the present situation, there is no reason to fear the truth. Matters relating to the faith have nothing to fear from the truth.

At the time of the consecrations I only knew one thing about Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc: that he had consecrated the visionaries of Palmar de Troya in Spain.

THE ADVENTURE OF PALMAR DE TROYA. Archbishop Lefebvre knew Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc quite well from the Second Vatican Council. He considered him to be a bishop with good doctrinal views. Like himself, this bishop belonged to the conservative group. It was because he considered him to be a Catholic bishop, committed to the faith, devoted to Mary, and having nothing to do, that he encouraged him to work with the

emissaries of Palmar de Troya who had come to Ecône in order to solicit his episcopal services. I heard these facts directly from Archbishop Lefebvre.

One day a canon of Saint Maurice named Father Revas arrived at the seminary in Ecône. He was accompanied by a priest who spoke English. A lover of the extraordinary, both had come from the location of the Apparitions. They came straight from Palmar to beg Archbishop Lefebvre to come to this location immediately because the Blessed Virgin was waiting for him. She was insisting that a Catholic bishop come in order to confer the episcopacy on those she planned to designate.

The Archbishop excused himself and advised them to "approach Archbishop Thuc. He is orthodox and he is not at present occupied. Go and seek him out. He will most certainly agree with your request." The two messengers immediately left and had no difficulty in convincing the elderly Vietnamese Archbishop to respond to the Virgin's request.

As I explained, I have these explanations directly from the mouth of Archbishop Lefebvre. He informed us of these facts on the occasion of a visit I made to Ecône when someone brought up the name of Archbishop Thuc at the dinner table.

I personally never knew the Vietnamese Archbishop before the time of my two visits to his residence at 22 rue Garibaldi, Toulon, in the district of Var, in France.

The first time was in March of 1981 when I went to ask him about a Father Garcia who wished to work with me and claimed to have been ordained by Archbishop Ngo.

The second time was on January 7, 1982, at which time I was accompanied by Father Barthe, an elderly priest connected with the association "Union pour la Fidelity." We had asked for a meeting because a Mexican priest friend had come and told us about the episcopal consecration of R. P. Guerard des Lauriers and Fathers Carmona and Zamora. We were desirous of having some information about their consecrations.

What follows is the summary of what happened at this visit such as is available from notes in the archives of the "Union pour la Fidelite."

"We arranged a meeting by telephone for Monday, the 5th. of January. Arriving at Toulon, we presented ourselves at his home at 8 o'clock in the morning. Despite the prearranged meeting, Archbishop Thuc was not there. A local businessman

who knew the archbishop said to us: "You are looking for grandfather?" (for such was he called in that part of town). He is at the Cathedral. We went there and found him assisting in the synaxe [i.e., the "Novus Ordo Missae"] of one of the priests. Father Barbara approached him. The Archbishop recognized him and came to him. On his own, he had us follow him towards the exit and we accompanied him to his home.

"The Archbishop lived in a very poor and dirty apartment on the first floor of an old tenement building. In appearance, it was a simple flat that was longer than wide, with a small side kitchen. On the right was a modest bed. In the corner was a table on which he celebrated the traditional rite as codified by Saint Pius V every morning. There were many pious images, a pile of "pocket books," two chairs and five cats that appeared to be everywhere. As he only had two chairs, the Archbishop sat on his bed and Father Barbara sat opposite him. The room was so small that Father Barthe had to place his chair behind the Archbishop.

"Archbishop Thuc informed us that he celebrated Mass in his apartment early every morning, and always in the traditional rite. Afterwards he would go to the Cathedral where the Archpriest had provided him with a confessional. When there was no acolyte available, he served the mass (by which I mean the synaxe). Father Barbara asked him what his relations with the [Novus Ordo] bishop of the cathedral were. He responded that the [novus ordo] Bishop of Toulon had given him the task of providing the Vietnamese with Confession, and also the powers of confession for anyone who came to him. Once a year, on Holy Thursday, he invited the elderly Archbishop to concelebrate mass with him in the new rite.

"Father Barbara reminded him that he had visited him during the previous year to ask for information about a certain Garcia of Marseille who the Archbishop had ordained. Archbishop Thuc informed us that he regretted having done so, because he had come to know that the Father in question was mentally unbalanced. "He wished me to consecrate him a bishop. I refused. But," he added, "why does everyone wish to be a bishop?"

"Father then explained to him the reason for our visit. A Mexican friend, Father Marquette, had informed us that he had consecrated the cure of Acapulco, Father Moses Carmona, and another Mexican, Father Zamora. The Archbishop admitted that such was the case. I didn't know them. There were two Germans, Heller and Hiller, who brought them to me and asked that I consecrate them. I had confidence in these two gentlemen because I knew Mr. Heller. He is a very fine person.

I knew him because he asked me to confirm his little daughter and I had confirmed her. These Germans are very generous. The two Mexican priests were consecrated here. I was able to speak with them in Latin. Father Carmona spoke much better Latin than did Father Zamora. The two Germans assisted. They had brought along everything that was necessary for the consecration. During the ceremony, they held the candles.

"Father Barbara then explained that we had also learned from Mexico that he had consecrated Father R. P. Guerard des Lauriers, O.P.

- "The Dominican?"

- "Yes"

- "It is true. I did indeed consecrate him. He is very knowledgeable." He then went on to explain that it was Father des Lauriers who had himself come and asked to be consecrated. The Germans supported his request.

- "Did these gentlemen assist in his consecration?" asked Father Barbara. We do not remember what he replied. On the other hand the Archbishop told us that once the ceremony was finished Father Guerard left without saying anything; but that later he wrote a letter which he had great difficulty in reading "because his writing is very small". Archbishop Ngo gave him an attestation such as he did every time he consecrated a person to be a bishop.

- "Have you consecrated other bishops?"

- "No!"

- "How about Arbinet?"

"The Archbishop took a moment to remember. He regretted having ordained this person as a priest, but he denied that he had consecrated him as a bishop. Since then he had learned that this individual had been disowned by his own family.

"Father Barbara then respectfully, but firmly, rebuked the elderly bishop:

"1 - With regard to the "Novus Ordo Missae" which the Archbishop assisted at, and once a year concelebrated: Father Barbara briefly explained that this "Novus Ordo" was not a Catholic Mass but a Protestant service.

"2 - With regard to the heretical nature of Vatican II and the new Church: Father Barbara explained that he must break with this Church and not continue to be in communion with the post-Conciliar hierarchy. Do not imitate Archbishop Lefebvre who cries forth from the rooftops that he recognizes the

legitimacy of the post-Conciliar hierarchy, and at the same time publicly disobeys them.

"3 - About the seriously illicit and culpable consecrations which he had conferred. To consecrate bishops without the authorization of John Paul II with whom you are in communion is an act which is materially schismatic. Moreover, the bishop who ordains without any precaution, assumes the responsibility for the actions of those whom he ordains. Father Barbara reminded Archbishop Ngo of the warning given to consecrators: "the bishop should not impose his hands lightly."

"Father Barbara further reminded the elderly archbishop of the need to be prepared for death - this at any age, but "how much more at yours!" He invited him to come to Forges in order to follow a course of Spiritual Exercises during a retreat. He advised him to make a general confession in order to prepare himself for the judgment of God.

"Father Barbara told the archbishop that he presumed to make this warning, not to place burdens on him, but in charity, for the love of God, the Church and himself. "Your excellence," he said, "if I could, I would say all this on my knees."

"Finally, Father Barbara warned him that he risked having difficulties with the official Church. His consecrations were becoming public knowledge. But there is nothing for you to be upset about. They have no authority since they do not belong to the [true] Church. On the other hand you should be worried about the judgment of God.

"The Archbishop appeared very moved. He spontaneously thanked Father Barbara, telling him that he understood that his behavior was based on a good will and a great charity. He asked for Father Barbara's address and told him he would get in touch with him if he decided to do the Spiritual Exercises. The Archbishop accompanied us to the front stairs of his house.

"Evaluation. Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc appeared to us as a poor, simple, but good person. He did not seem to have understood the crisis the Church had faced subsequent to Vatican II. Also, perhaps he was unwilling to see that some individuals were imposing on his goodness. Beyond this, he gave us the impression that matters of licitness were not very important for him."

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THE REAL ARCHBISHOP NGO DINH THUC

The summary given above was written the day after our visit of January 7, 1982. Since then, I have given further thought to the matter and have discovered a different Archbishop Thuc, one that I had not previously known.

First of all, one should read his autobiography. This is important for those who only know the archbishop because of his connection with Palmar de Troya, the essential details of which I have reported.

Archbishop Peter-Martin Ngo Dinh Thuc was born at Hue, on October 6, 1897, of profoundly Christian parents. His father had wished to be a priest, and had undertaken studies with this end in view.

His mother, born of a petite bourgeoisie family in Quang-ngai (south Vietnam) was considered to be a saint by her confessor. During a very prolonged illness from which she died, she inspired the adoration of all who knew her.

His father, Ngo Dinh Kha, was an excellent Latinist and worked very hard to introduce French into Central Vietnam. After having been the preceptor to the young king Thant Thai, and then Minister of the Imperial Household, he fell into disgrace because he refused to vote against his sovereign.

His elder brother, Ngo Dinh Khoi, was an excellent Christian. Because of his refusal to become a minister in the first communist government, he, along with his son, was buried alive.

The three other children of Ngo Dinh Kha are Diem, the father of the Vietnamese Republic, Nhu and Can, his close collaborators. They were assassinated by the C.I.A. Ngo Dinh Can was not with his older brothers at the time they were murdered. He was successful in hiding himself in a shelter provided by the Redemptorist Fathers in Hue. He was betrayed and delivered into the hands of rebellious generals by a shady scheme inaugurated by the American consul. Before executing him, the communists imprisoned him in a cage for over a year. He was, despite this, able to receive holy communion every day, thanks to the devotion of a Vietnamese Redemptorist Father. He died very courageously with the rosary in his hand.

Of all the children of Ngo Dinh Kha, only two were able to escape annihilation, Ngo Dinh Luyen and Ngo Dinh Thuc. The first who had graduated from the Central School for Engineers in Paris was at the time ambassador in London. The other was in Rome where he was involved in the Second Vatican Council.

As a young man Thuc had entered the junior seminary in Anninh at the age of 12. He spent 8 years there before going on to study philosophy at the major seminary in Hue. He was then selected to study theology in Rome and returned to his country in 1927 after being awarded three doctorates, one in philosophy, one in theology, and the third in canon law. In addition, he received a license to teach from the Sorbonne.

His bishop successively nominated him to the rank of professor at the College of Vietnamese Brothers in Hue, a professor at the Major Seminary in Hue, and Dean of the College of Providence.

In 1938, at the age of 41, he was chosen by Rome to direct the Apostolic Vicariate at Vinhlong. He was appointed as the titular bishop of Sesina on January 8, and was consecrated on May 4, 1938. He took as his episcopal symbol "Miles Christi - Soldier of Christ." He was the third Vietnamese priest raised to the Episcopate.

The new pastor immediately dedicated himself to the organization of his Vicariate.

Given the reverses that Christianity was sustaining in this part of the world, Pope Pius XI, understood the urgency of opening a Catholic university in South Vietnam for the formation of Christians of the former French protectorate. The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith informed the local bishops of the Pontiff's heart-felt desire and further informed them that the Holy Father wished that one of the official languages of this University should be French in order that the ancient proteges of France, the Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians could all go there for their formation. The local bishops designated Bishop Martin Ngo Dinh Thuc as the person who could best accomplish the wishes of the Holy Father.

Where could the necessary funds for such an enterprise be found in a country engaged in a subversive war? Apart from the blessing of the Pope and the bishop of Vinhlong, all he had was a good will. This is hardly enough to establish a University, even in a mission country. Without being discouraged, the good bishop set to work. Thanks to the support he was able to count on, he was granted by the government of Diem, the authority to exploit an ancient forest. Thus, it was by his own industry, his efforts and his tenacity, that Bishop Ngo rapidly accumulated all the necessary funds to bring the task he had undertaken to completion, thus fulfilling the desire of the Pope and providing his country with a Catholic university. One last detail worthy of being underlined: by means of his industry, disinterest and foresight he provided this university

with sufficient income to guarantee its ability to persist as an independent enterprise.

On November 24, 1960, John XXIII, who succeeded Pius XII, transferred the Apostolic Vicarage of Vinhlong to the head of the Metropolitan See at Hue, the city where Bishop Ngo was born.

1962 was the year of the Second Vatican Council. On October 11, Bishop Ngo Dinh Thuc was in Rome. This absence so far away from his native land at the moment when his brothers were assassinated, saved his life.

After the Council was finished, like bishops from every country, those from South Vietnam returned to their own dioceses. However the Archbishop of Hue was unable to obtain permission to return to his See. In his Autobiography Archbishop Ngo informs us that "The Americans forced the Government of South Vietnam to refuse me permission to return."

He then approached Paul VI, thinking that he would in this way obtain the necessary authorization. Did Montini intervene? Once again, the Archbishop tells us in his autobiography: "Paul VI used my inability to return to my See to force me to resign and to name as my replacement one of his favorites, Bishop Dien." From that time forward he led an uprooted life.

I who have written these lines and who am myself a "black sheep," well know what it means to a priest not to belong to a diocese and to have to support himself. Consider the absence of eagerness with which new priests are welcomed by those who are supposed to welcome them. For him, there appeared to be no place in the vineyard of the Lord. Did the Master make a mistake when he stated that "the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few?"

The Archbishop was not the kind of person who could remain idle, and before concerning himself with his own needs, this man who spoke fluent Italian looked in Italy for some ministry. He wished to be useful and to support himself in a decent manner. But he who no longer belonged to any diocese was also a stranger in the House of his Mother.

Thanks to a prelate who had been apostolic delegate in Vietnam, Archbishop Ngo was able to find food and lodging in a reception center in Rome, but he had to pay a fee for this. In order to obtain the funds to do this, he offered his services to a cure in the parish. This priest was only too happy to accept his offer ... and to exploit him.

Despite his priestly efforts he was unable to earn enough to pay his bill at the Reception Center. Archbishop Ngo asked the cure to provide him with an empty room at the vicarage, but the cure refused. He was jealous of the Bishop who because of his kindness and availability ended up seeing his confessional besieged by all the penitents that formerly went to the cure. Despite everything he did, he could not help but antagonize the head of the parish who became increasingly unpleasant, and this to such a degree that the Archbishop finally had to leave.

As he had previously known Dom Nivardo Buttarazzi, the Reverend Abbot of the Monastery of Casamari in the center of Italy, the ancient Archbishop went and knocked at his door. He was received as a brother and given a room in the guest house. For about one and a half years the Archbishop stayed there contentedly. He made himself useful by confessing the faithful of the parish which was dependent on the Abbey and the monks who came to him. Unfortunately, one day, these religious decided to organize an exhibition of nudes in the library of the Monastery. The Bishop showed his disapproval with the greatest of discretion. But this was more than they could accept and they asked him to leave the place as soon as he could make other arrangements.

Where could he go? The local bishop who had made his sympathies known to the Archbishop on several occasions, asked him to preside over certain ceremonies and to share his meals. The Archbishop then went to the bishop's house. He begged his confrere to give him a small church that had no priest where he could serve, provided that it had a sacristy where he could place a bed and stay.

The Bishop was agreeable and appointed him to the village of Arpino which consisted of a dozen families. The titular priest was happy to accept the assistance which Providence had provided him through the bishop. "I was happy to stay there with the small flock over which I was the secondary shepherd," he tells us in his biography, and I thought that Arpino would be my last resting place in this world ... At that time a priest came to me who I had formerly known in Econe, Switzerland. He said to me point-blank: "Your Excellency, the Holy Virgin has sent me to bring you at once to Spain in order to render her a service. My car is waiting for you at the door of the presbytery and we will leave immediately so as to reach there by Christmas." Thrilled by this invitation, I said to him: "If it is a service demanded by the Holy Virgin, I am ready to follow you to the end of the world."

And this is how the adventure of Palmar de Troya came

about, an event which has attracted the attention of all those who asked him for episcopal consecrations.

#### HIS COMPROMISE WITH THE VARIOUS SECTS

I have taken the trouble to describe the life of Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc in order to make it possible for my readers to know him better. It follows that he appears to us to have been a truly Catholic bishop, devoted to the Holy See and to the care of souls, a worthy successor to the Apostles in the mission lands, having well merited the designation which this title confers, from both the Roman Church and from his own nation.

Some will however point out that all his qualities and all his good works should not lead us to forget that he also consecrated certain individuals who no longer belonged to the Church because said individuals had separated themselves from the Church by the formal sin of heresy or schism.[19]

I for one have not forgotten this. But, as I explained above, if one accepts the worst possible scenario with regard to him, namely that he administered the sacrament of orders and episcopal consecration on unquestionable heretics and schismatics with full awareness of the fact, such a grave fault would still not make him a formal heretic or schismatic and would have no influence over the grace conferred by such sacramental acts.

In order not to be misled with regard to this important issue we should recall the teaching of the Church on the manner in which Sacramental Grace is produced. The person who confers the sacrament is only a minister, an instrument endowed with liberty. The state of his soul is only of concern to himself. He will be rewarded if he is in a state of grace, or chastised if he is not. But his personal condition has no influence on the sacramental grace conferred. St. Augustine summarized this teaching with what has become a classic statement: "Peter performs the act of Baptism, but it is Christ who Baptizes. Judas performs the act of Baptism, but it is Christ who Baptizes." The grace of the Baptism conferred by Peter is no greater and no better than the grace of the Baptism conferred by Judas. If we replace the word Baptism with that of episcopal consecration, we can see that even under the circumstances of the most unfavorable scenario outlined above with regard to Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc, the bishops consecrated by him are no less consecrated bishops than if the rite had been performed by Saint Pius X.

To finish up our discussion of this issue, one last point

should be made. Before asking Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc for consecration, Father R. P. Guerard des Lauriers explained the "Thesis of Cassiciacum" to him. It was only after the Archbishop gave him the assurance that he also held to such a position – it was easy for the elderly Archbishop to do this because he held the Holy See to be vacant from the time of Paul VI – was the consecration of the Dominican Father decided on. I obtained this information directly from Father Lucien who in turn obtained it directly from Father Guerard des Lauriers.

Nor was Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc only willing to declare this vacancy of the Holy See privately. As much as he could he made his position clear in the public forum. And God, who directs all things wished this fact to be as it were, juridically registered. In effect, in the official letter (Prot. N. 7/76) from Rome dated February 1, 1983 and addressed to His Excellency Archbishop Pierre-Martin Ngo Dinh Thuc, the titular Archbishop of Buila Regia, from Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, it is explicitly mentioned that: "A public declaration published in Munich on February 25, 1982 under your own signature affirms that according to you, 'THE SEE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IS AT THIS TIME VACANT,' and that it is necessary for you 'AS A BISHOP TO DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN IN ORDER THAT THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH CAN CONTINUE TO GUIDE SOULS TO THEIR ETERNAL SALVATION'." (Review "Einsicht," March 1982, page 8).

This Declaration is of the greatest possible importance with regard to what we are discussing.[20] It manifests the primary condition which would allow Archbishop Ngo to presume an Apostolic Mandate, a condition without which he could not use the principal of Epikeia. The consecrations performed under such circumstances are not only perfectly valid, but also perfectly licit.

#### THE RITE UTILIZED

The Rite used was that which existed before the reforms of Paul VI. As the rubrics require, the consecrations were conferred during a Mass celebrated according to the traditional form as codified by Saint Pius V. The witnesses are very clear with regard to this matter. But apart from their witness, it suffices to know the interested parties to understand that none of the parties involved would have been agreeable to the consecration using any other than the traditional Catholic rite.[21]

#### THE INDIVIDUALS CONSECRATED

It is here that we must be most prudent.

I beg the reader to make a special effort to remember that, even when valid, an Episcopal Consecration does not have the power to reconcile anyone with the Church who knowingly had separated himself from it. We should not forget that the absence of Authority hinders the reconciliation of repentant heretics and schismatics IN THE EXTERNAL FORUM.[22] Therefore, when it comes to bishops consecrated by Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc, or those consecrated by bishops whom he consecrated, it is necessary to DISTINGUISH IN AN ABSOLUTE MANNER BETWEEN:

1 – Catholic priests that have asked for the Episcopacy or have been willing to be consecrated in order to serve the Church and to preserve the Catholic priesthood which is the source of the sacramental life.

Those who were Catholic priests before their consecration have become Catholic bishops after their consecration to the same degree as have those bishops consecrated by Archbishop Lefebvre.

2 – The others. All those who have profited from the crisis of the Church and from the good will of the elderly Archbishop (even though it be with his complicity in those cases where he had been aware of their status) to obtain valid Sacerdotal or Episcopal Consecration,

- some to be sure they possess true powers.[23]
- others to restore to someone a true Catholic image.
- still others to reform or establish a new discipline for the Church.[24]

Even if these individuals are priests or bishops, because they still are outside the bosom of the Church, they are not Catholic and do not have the right to use the powers which they have obtained under fraudulent circumstances. Their exercise of these powers is sacrilegious and those who know this and yet participate in their ministry, also participate in their crime and incur the censures attached to "communicatio in divinis cum acatholicis."

Subsequent to the affair of Palmar de Troya, the only Catholic priests to my knowledge that were consecrated by Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc were R. P. Guerard des Lauriers, O.P. and Fathers Carmona and Adolfo Zamora. Unfortunately the three have passed away, but they have passed on the Episcopate to:

– BISHOP GUERARD DES LAURIERS to Fathers Gunther Storck and R. P. Robert McKenna, O.P.

- BISHOP MOISES CARMONA to Fathers George Musey (now deceased), Benigno Bravo (now deceased), Roberto Martinez and Mark Pivarunas.

#### GENERAL CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude this brief study about the orthodoxy of some of the consecrations conferred by Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc with one last point.

Both of the two lines of Catholic Bishops - those which derive from the founder of Econe and those which derive from the Vietnamese prelate - are valid. Can it be said that there is no difference between them?

No. In point of fact, there are several differences.

- THE FIRST point of difference is minor and favors the line of consecrations initiated by Archbishop Lefebvre.

While the consecrations of Archbishop Thuc were conferred in a secret manner, great publicity surrounded the consecrations at Econe. But I should also point out and we should not forget that after the consecrations of Guerard des Lauriers and the Mexican priests, the attacks on Archbishop Thuc because of them led to their losing their secret character. They became public and so rapidly so that Rome was immediately aware of them and intervened. This intervention on the part of Rome provided these consecrations with the notoriety which they formerly lacked.

- THE SECOND difference favors the line established by Archbishop Thuc.

The consecrations at Econe were conferred after John Paul II refused permission, and despite the formal prohibition against them. And this while both consecrator and those consecrated recognized John Paul II as a legitimate pope. TO ACT IN THIS STRANGE MANNER CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS SCHISMATIC BEHAVIOR.

On the other hand, those performed by Archbishop Thuc were performed by someone who had recognized and publicly declared that the Holy See lacked a FORMALITER pope. Two fortunate things followed from this recognition of the absence of any Authority. It allowed both consecrator and those consecrated to invoke the principle of Epikeia in presuming an apostolic mandate AND AS A RESULT RENDERED THE CONSECRATIONS CONFERRED, NOT ONLY VALID, BUT ALSO LICIT.

- THE THIRD difference is the most important.

WHILE NOT BELIEVING THE BISHOPS IN THE LEFEBVRE LINE TO BE FORMAL HERETICS OR SCHISMATICS, IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY ARE BEHAVING IN A SCHISMATIC MANNER. Up to the last minute they persist in publicly ridiculing the authority of the individual who they continue to recognize as a true pope of the Catholic Church and the individual invested with the powers of Peter. SUCH BEHAVIOR IS GRAVELY SCANDALOUS. IT IS A SCANDAL AGAINST THE FAITH.

The Bishops who derive their consecration from Archbishop Thuc have behaved in an openly Catholic manner. Believing John Paul II to be an antichrist, the principal destroyer of the Catholic faith, they refuse to pay any attention to his decisions. They know very well that he cannot be the Vicar of Christ, that he possesses absolutely no Authority, and they declare this openly so as to avoid giving scandal.

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#### AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT PIUS X

- I Fundamental reasons for our disagreement
- II What faithful Catholics ought to be able to expect from you
- III Mgr. Lefebvre and witnessing to the faith
- IV The Catholic resistance betrayed by Ecône

Conclusion -  
Did Mgr. Lefebvre compromise his eternal salvation?

ADDITION. A Letter to Father Coache,  
Editor of "Combat de la Foi"

\* \* \*

#### AN OPEN LETTER

TO FATHER FRANZ SCHMIDBERGER, SUPERIOR GENERAL,  
TO THEIR EXCELLENCIES  
BERNARD TISSIER DE MALLERAI, S.  
RICHARD WILLIAMSON, ALFONSO DE GALARRETA, S.  
BERNARD FELLAY, LICINIO RANGEL

AND TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT PIUS X

Your Society, known as the Society of Saint Pius X, and those who are your followers pose a very great problem to the Catholic conscience.

I had wished to organize a conference so that we could discuss these issues privately among ourselves rather than in public. While not believing that we would resolve all the problems, I held and continue to hold that Catholic priests of good will should be capable of coming to some kind of agreement, at least with regard to those reasons which justify our resistance to the popes of Vatican II. My conviction is based upon the solid foundation of the faith. A Church which fails to provide a clear and certain response to a matter upon which the eternal salvation of her children depends cannot be the Church of Christ.

Who would participate in such a meeting? On the part of the Society of St. Pius X, those whom the superiors would designate; for my part, I had already indicated two or three associates who would join me.

Since the beginning of 1988, I have not ceased from pressing your superiors to arrange a time in writing or by phone.

At the time of the Episcopal consecrations rumor had it that Mgr. Lefebvre was hesitant about proceeding. I therefore wrote to Father Lorans and asked him to arrange for me to meet with the Archbishop in order to make him understand the reasons which militated in favor of the consecrations. I do not know whether or not your associate made arrangements for such a meeting because he did not even bother to acknowledge my letter.

On June 27, 1988, following the advice of Father Aulagnier with whom I had made telephone contact, I wrote directly to Mgr. Lefebvre by fax. I encouraged him to proceed with the consecrations after publicly declaring that he had separated himself from the "antichrist" John Paul II.

As you well know, the Archbishop took no notice of my suggestion and he also failed to acknowledge my letter.[2]

I subsequently learned that I was not the only person to press the Archbishop to break with John Paul II. Mgr. Antonio de Castro Mayer, the Bishop of Campos in Brazil, shared this attitude and openly expressed his opinion to your founder. But the Archbishop refused to listen to reason. – This however did not prevent the Brazilian prelate from declaring and from

saying out loud, as he walked through the crowds of the faithful on the day of the consecrations, that "We do not have a pope! We do not have a pope!" - This was confirmed to me by two reliable people.

The first confirmation was provided to me at Steffeshausen in Belgium. During the course of a lecture which I was giving on the crisis in the Church at Father Paul Schoonbroodt's, one of the auditors, surprised to hear me declare that, since he lacked Authority, John Paul II could not be a true pope, stood up and said, "You are surely aware, Reverend Father, that Mgr. Lefebvre has said exactly the opposite." Father Paul Schoonbroodt did not give me an opportunity to answer. Standing up, he declared: "The Reverend Father is only saying out loud what Mgr. Lefebvre thinks but doesn't say." He added, "On the day of the consecrations, after the ceremony, I went to Mgr. Lefebvre. "Your Excellency," I said to him, "in my name and in the name of the German-speaking faithful who have come with me to these consecrations, I have come to tell you our surprise and our disappointment. We were expecting a frank and open declaration of your break with John Paul II. Your confrere, Bishop Antonio de Castro Mayer, did not hesitate to say to anyone interested in listening: "We do not have a pope! ". "Yes indeed," replied the Archbishop, "some priests from Campos asked that I do this. But such a declaration would turn too many of the faithful away from us."

The second confirmation also came from Belgium. A young man sent me a signed statement. Here it is. "On the occasion of a conference given in Bruxelles by Mgr. Lefebvre, I had the opportunity to meet a priest who knew me and who shared with me the contents of a conversation he had had with the Archbishop. The priest had said to Mgr. Lefebvre: "I know a young man who thinks that John Paul II is not a true pope." The Archbishop replied: "I think that this young man is correct, but I cannot say so because it would cause harm in my priories and seminaries."

After the consecrations and the defection of those who departed to create the Fraternity of St. Peter, the ambiance of the Society seemed to have changed. I took advantage of this to once again press for a meeting to discuss doctrinal matters. At one time I believed that such a project might actually come about, for Father Aulagnier wrote me to express his concurrence with the idea.

I made every effort to meet with your Superior General. I sent him a personal letter requesting a meeting and I asked insistently Father Aulagnier to support my request. At first Father SCHMIDBERGER accepted, but, as he had to be away for

several weeks, he asked me to await his return. Two months later, not receiving any further news, I wrote again to remind him of his promise. On December 23 he sent me a note stating, "I do not wish to undertake the discussions which you desire."

Without being discouraged, I continued to maintain contact with those in the Society with whom I could do so discretely.[3]

Continuing my efforts to bring about a doctrinal conference, I published an original study[4] early in 1991, in which I made explicit the problem which the popes of Vatican II posed for the Catholic conscience. I further specified the response which the faith demanded, then I enumerated the various possibilities that theologians could come up with to explain the conciliar anomaly. I thought that this distinction could foster unity among all those who resist the popes of Vatican II. In effect, on the one hand it reduces the issue of the vacancy of the Holy See to the realm of personal opinion, and on the other, it made it clear that the popes of Vatican II whom we resist lack all Pontifical Authority.

I sent a copy of this issue of "Forts dans la Foi" to all the members of the Society whose address I had (more than 100). Fifteen days later I wrote to each of them a further letter drawing their attention to the importance of this issue. In order to foster a dialogue I terminated my letter with several very simple questions.[5] Not one of them had the courtesy to reply.

Despite the rudeness of this silence, I wrote again on the second of August. I did not write to everyone, but only to those who I thought had a greater measure of integrity, competence, and priestly spirit. Among these I included the four Bishops along with Fathers Paul Aulagnier, Alain Lorans and Michel Simoulin. Only Bishop Tissier de Mallerais had the decency to respond, with the following precision which I well remember: "in order not to be 'boorish' towards you."

As you might imagine, this letter was a source of great pleasure for me. It was possible for a dialogue to be initiated. Unfortunately, we only exchanged two letters. I am still waiting for a reply to my letter of October 1st, 1991. Perhaps the Bishop is afraid of being too forward and prefers to remain among the other "boors."

And thus, after three years of futile effort, I must face facts. In your entire organization, which includes your founder and your Superior General, I have been unable to find a single priest with a truly sacerdotal heart resembling that of

our divine Master. Who among you has ever been willing to personally get involved in order to alleviate, or even to understand the suffering of our faithful Catholics? I have never encountered anything among you but arrogant indifference with regard to everything that is not connected with the Society of Saint Pius X.

Here is an example of this lamentable manner of behaving. One of your leaders, Bishop Tissier de Mallerais, had the honesty to clearly tell me in a letter sent on August 17, 1991: "We will not change our position. It is you who must accept ours."

No longer seeing the possibility of discussing these matters in a discrete manner, I am going to publicly state what you would not hear in the privacy of a sacerdotal meeting. By doing so I will both unburden my conscience and clarify matters for my readers.

I shall start by reminding you of the fundamental reason for all our disagreements: the person who currently occupies the Holy See.

Next I shall tell you what the faithful Catholics were entitled to expect from Archbishop Lefebvre and from your Society. We will see how the Archbishop shied away from providing the witness which he should have provided, and how Ecône continues to betray the Catholic resistance. In conclusion I shall cite the reasons which allow me to seriously entertain doubts about the eternal salvation of your founder, which reasons also seriously compromise your own.

## I – THE FUNDAMENTAL REASON FOR OUR DISAGREEMENT

You refuse to admit that the public and obstinate refusal to obey the orders of the reigning pope constitutes a problem of the faith and as such touches upon our eternal salvation.

Pressed by necessity, you continue to act without taking account of the fact that you have placed yourselves in a situation which is morally unacceptable.

If this matter only involved yourselves, since you have obstinately refused all attempts at fraternal correction, it would be legitimate to let you go your own way.[6] But such is not the case. For there are other souls which you direct and involve in this uncatholic behavior, and above all there is the Catholic resistance which you betray by consciously misleading them in a most serious manner. And in all this the responsibility of your founder is so great that, viewed with

the eyes of faith, it is allowable to raise questions about his eternal salvation.

Before discussing these delicate matters, let me once again remind you that it is you who have forced me to raise these issues in the public forum because of your persistent refusal to discuss them discretely in private.

#### 1) YOUR MANNER OF BEHAVING IS NOT MORAL

Consult any Catholic author that you wish. You will always find, especially when it is a matter that encroaches upon the good of another, that it is immoral to act without having a clear and certain conscience that one is acting justly.

You have disregarded this elementary principle of the natural law. And as a habit becomes second nature, this manner of behaving has become so natural for you that it goes without saying that it requires no more justification than does a primary principle.

Do not think that I am exaggerating. On December 23rd 1988 your Superior General, Father FRANZ SCHMIDBERGER, wrote me, probably without being aware of the seriousness of his statement: "Our resistance to the supreme authority has no other motive than the Catholic faith deserted by this authority, which we ought to preserve at any cost, WITHOUT ANY NEED ON OUR PART TO JUDGE THE CANONICAL SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE PAPACY." (Father Barbara's capitals)

Thus, for your Superior General and for you, even though this supreme authority has deserted the Catholic faith, the pope retains his Authority, which is to say, he continues to be the proximate rule of faith, without any need on your part to judge his canonical status.

For you and for your Superior General, the fact that formerly Paul VI, and today John Paul II is or is not the pope is so secondary and incidental, and of so little importance, that you refuse to involve yourselves in the matter. It is as if you had decided to deliberately neglect this as a matter of minor interest which can only distract you from what is essential.

What is essential for you is "to preserve the Catholic faith at any cost."

Obviously, it is not I who will reproach you in your desire to "uphold the Catholic faith." But you must not do

this "at any cost." At least not in the sense that you mean by this expression: that it is unimportant whether or not John Paul II is canonically pope. In point of fact, one cannot defend the faith by transgressing the faith. As the Apostle Paul said, "Nefaciamus mala ut veniant bona, Let us not do evil in hopes of bringing about some good." (Rom. III, 8) No! Even when one intends to defend the faith, one cannot do something which "draws the displeasure of God" on those who defend it.

If the reigning pope is the Vicar of Christ, and for you he is, since, despite your bishops, your seminaries and your university, you avow that you are incapable of proving the opposite, you cannot resist him as you openly do without gravely offending Christ (read Luke X, 16), and without mortally sinning.

And even worse, your systematic refusal and opposition to any study of the problem allows one to seriously doubt your good faith.[7] You know very well that once this problem has been posed, you are obliged to resolve it. It is understandable that you are afraid of doing this. You are so sure that the popes of Vatican II are true popes. If they are such, they are truly invested with the Authority of Christ. With the false ideas that have been inculcated in you about the infallibility of the magisterium, for you to discover the true doctrine about obedience would oblige you to submit to the directives of these popes, and Paul VI ordered you to cease all your activities immediately.

You sense that you would not be able to continue your activities unless you were capable of saying and of proving that these popes were not truly such, that they no longer were invested with Authority. Now you are incapable of doing this. You are incapable of doing this because of the doctrinal teaching about the pope with which you were imbued at Ecône. You are also incapable of doing this because of the humiliation which would fall upon you for recognizing that you were in error with regard to this matter.

All that is required to understand this exigency of theological faith is to read St. Paul and to believe the word of God: "Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation." (Rom. XIII: 1-2)

Among "all the authorities instituted by God," I cannot understand why you persist throughout your Society in excluding that of the pope.

If words have any meaning, and if the Apostle was not just talking for the sake of talking, it is as clear as day that in resisting the authority of the popes, it is God Himself whom you are resisting, and that it is on yourselves, and on those who follow you, that you draw God's displeasure.

In order to prevent us from being misled on this point by private opinion (lit. free examination of Scripture), God in His mercy desired that the popes prior to Vatican II should remind us that the necessity of obedience to the Pope is a truth of divine faith which is indispensable for salvation. It suffices for me to provide but two citations to this effect.

The first, taken from Boniface VIII: "We declare, we state, we define and proclaim that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human being to be submissive to the sovereign Pontiff." [8]

The second from Pius XI: "No one can live, no one can persevere in the one Church of Christ, if he does not recognize and accept the necessity of OBEDIENCE TO THE AUTHORITY and the POWER of Peter and his legitimate successors." [9]

2) HOW IS IT THAT THIS PROBLEM WITH REGARD TO THE FAITH HAS ESCAPED YOUR NOTICE?

I can only see one explanation. [10] You are afraid of the consequences of such a study and you have not yet understood that this fear is childish and without any foundation. It derives from all the false ideas you have with regard to the magisterium. It appears that you ignore the very "raison d'etre" of the pope in the Church, the extent of his authority as well as that of his infallibility. You hold to ideas that are not Catholic.

Whether or not this is the true reason, the facts remain unchanged. As long as you continue to act without resolving this problem, you will remain in opposition to the word of God as taught by St. Paul.

In effect, no matter what practical expedient you advance in order to avoid facing this problem, your behavior will remain schismatic and your reasons heretical. The only way you can be relieved of this embarrassment is by adhering to the truth. "Veritas liberabit vos." The truth shall make you free. (John VIII, 32)

Practically speaking, you have locked yourselves into a false dilemma. For you, these popes, having been elected in a

normal manner, are of necessity true popes that really possess the Authority of Peter such as is essential to the papacy.[11] As a result of this, whether you obey them as St. Paul commanded, or you oppose them as the faith demands, you inevitably end up in a blasphemous absurdity.

In both situations you place God in the position of contradicting Himself. In the first, by ordering you to submit, which is to say, to accept the innovations, God places you under obligation to preach what is contrary to the faith. In the second, He commands you to oppose the person whom He at the same time orders you to obey, and this under pain of incurring His displeasure.

Faced with this irresolvable dilemma, in place of reexamining your reasons in order to resolve the difficulty into which you have locked yourselves, you have preferred to behave like an ostrich. Like this stupid creature – this animal being stupid by its nature, whereas you are so by free choice – you have decided that there is no danger as long as one does not open one's eyes. In this way you rush blindly into action, indifferent about morality because, according to your theory, you cannot transgress against morality as long as you are defending the faith.

It would be so easy for you to be free of this conflict. How? By your humble submission, in the spirit of the faith, to the most certain teaching of the Church about the pope. All that is required is for you to study it and to have the courage which the faith provides to put it into practice. Bear with me a little longer and I shall review some points of Catholic doctrine that we simply must know to settle the issue on which we are divided.

### 3) A REVIEW OF SOME PERTINENT POINTS OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINE.

#### THE FAITH

The faith teaches us that we must adhere to the word of God. Under the influence of this theological virtue, the will inclines our intelligence to accept the witness of God and to consider it as true and infallible despite any appearance to the contrary that might deter us from adhering to it.

This virtue, "the root and foundation of justification," is lost by a single sin against it. Recall the case of Hymeneus and Philetus who made shipwreck concerning the faith, and how they were guilty of denying but a single dogma (I Tim. I, 19–20 and II Tim. II, 17–18). Pope Leo XIII explained this: "For such is the nature of the faith that nothing is more

impossible than to believe one thing while rejecting another ... He who, even on a single point, refuses his assent to divinely revealed truths, in actuality denies by that very fact the entire faith." ("Satis Cognitum")

The faith, as I have already pointed out, is the foundation and the root of justification. A sin against faith, by destructing this root and foundation, separates the sinner so profoundly from Christ that he is cut off from His Mystical Body, which is the Church. Unlike all the other sins which lead to the loss of the nuptial robe, but allow the sinner to remain at the feast, a sin against faith leads to his being thrown out.

Once the faith has been lost, the most holy of actions, such as founding seminaries and universities, constructing churches and schools, consecrating bishops and ordaining priests in the traditional rites, opening Saint Pius V Mass centers, and traversing the entire world to provide the faithful with the sacraments or, if you prefer examples taken from the Scriptures, prophesying, casting out devils and performing numerous miracles in the name of Jesus (Matt. VII, 22), all that is useless in the eyes of God if those who do this have betrayed the faith with regard to a single point.

Consider the Gospel. Those whom the Master gave us as examples were sincere believers. Further, as a result of all their wonderful works, "prophesying, casting out demons in His name" and, always in His name, "performing numerous miracles," they had reason to feel secure. They certainly thought that they would have a fine place in heaven. Imagine their shock on hearing the Sovereign Judge tell them in no uncertain terms: I never knew you. Depart from me, you that work iniquity. (Matt VII, 23)

We cannot doubt but that the Good Shepherd knows his sheep (John X, 14 & 27). Those to whom He said, I never knew you are certainly not of His sheepfold despite all appearances to the contrary.

Allow me to emphasize this. One can do wonderful works and do them in the name of Jesus without belonging to the sheepfold of Christ. We have just heard this from the lips of the Master Himself.

The sheepfold of Christ is the house of the faith (Gal. VI, 10). In order to be in it, one must have the faith. Those unfortunate individuals described in the Scriptures, intoxicated by brilliant achievements, easy successes, and by the admiration of naive followers, forgot that a single sin

against this virtue of faith would cause them to lose everything. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. XI, 6).

## AUTHORITY

Authority is something delegated by God to his creatures. Those who receive this delegation are invested with the Authority of God Himself. This is why the Holy Spirit warns us that to resist established authority, regardless of its nature, is to resist God who has established said authority in all its forms.

THE LIMITS OF AUTHORITY – Apart from Christ, who received from the Father "all authority over heaven and earth" (Mt. XXVIII, 18), the extent of all constituted authority is limited.

It is first of all limited by the nature and the purpose of the society for which the chief wielding this authority was designated.

With regard to this limit, it is necessary to define the nature and the end of any authority in an appropriate manner, as well as the means required to preserve this nature and achieve this end.

In every society, the head is the primary servant; he is never the proprietor. It is for this reason that he has been invested with Authority by God, namely in order that he might serve that society and preserve its real character, and stimulate his subjects in view of the end for which they all are associated together and which each should promote.

The head has no rights and no power over the nature and the purpose of the society he controls; he has no authority to change them in any way. He has received the authority which he possesses in order to prevent any individual from changing the nature of the said society or deviating from the ends for which it was established, and also to assure that all the members pursue the designated ends without flagging in their efforts.

On the other hand, as long as the nature and the purpose of the society in question are safeguarded, the chief has complete liberty, full authority and total power to select the means which he judges appropriate in order to preserve its nature and achieve its ends. This is the reason that he was made the chief.

The means that do not compromise the nature and ends of

the society are multiple.[12] The choice of one over another is free. As with everything which is not imposed in an absolute manner, the adoption or the rejection of any given means always has both advantages and disadvantages. Who is not aware of the ancient adage "Quot homines, tot sententiae?" (There are as many different opinions as there are men.) Under such circumstances, who will make the choice of the means that are required in order to assure the unity of the group while at the same time promoting its end? Obviously, the chief. His function is to decide, among the various means offered to him, those which in his judgement best guarantee the specific nature of the society and assure the most efficacious means of pursuing its end. Let us also note that by acting in this manner, the chief assures the unity of the group. In effect, once he has made a decision, all those under his authority are obliged to make this decision their own, even if they formerly held to a different opinion.

Authority is also limited by the realm or territory for which those in authority were invested.

There is also a limit with regard to time. A chief possesses the authority as soon as he is invested and he retains this authority until the expiration of the appointed time. He loses it by death, by insanity, and also when he gives it up or when a superior authority withdraws it from him.

PONTIFICAL AUTHORITY – The purpose of the Church was made clear by Christ. "And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. XXVIII, 18–20; Mark XVI, 15). The purpose for which the Church was established is thus the preservation, the interpretation and the integral transmission of everything that the Master revealed to us in order that we might believe and practice it – this is what St. Paul called the "good deposit"[13] (II Tim. I, 14).

The authority of the Pope was defined by the Master. The first time he did so was when he promised Simon to make him Peter: "And I say to thee: That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven" (Matt. XVI,

18-19). He did so a second time when he established Peter as the Pastor over all. Addressing Himself to Simon Peter, Jesus said: "Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep" (John XXI, 15-17).

According to the words of our Master, the authority of the Pope extends over the entire Church; over the pastors as well as over the faithful. WITH REGARD TO THE NATURE AND THE FINAL ENDS OF THE CHURCH, WHICH IS TO SAY, WITHIN THE LIMITS OF ORTHODOXY, THE AUTHORITY OF THE POPE IS LIMITLESS.

Truly, I cannot see how anyone can limit his authority when Christ Himself gave him this authority without limits. EVERYTHING you will bind, EVERYTHING you will loose, EVERYTHING will be sanctioned in heaven.

There is no reason to be afraid of such an affirmation. One should not conclude that, as a result of this TOTAL authority, the Pope has the right to change anything in the Church that he wants. Nothing could be farther from the truth or more absurd than such a proposition.

This unlimited power was given to His Vicar by Christ, the Wisdom of God, in the manner which I have made clear, namely within the limits of the nature of the Church and the ends for which He established her. This is to say that the Pope has complete power and total authority in order to preserve intact and faithfully transmit the good deposit and to see to it that this good deposit is faithfully taught to all people in order that they might be able to believe and practice everything that the Master commanded. But he has absolutely no power, no right, and no authority to change or allow others to change, even in the minutest degree, the nature of the Church or the ends for which she was established.

On the other hand, the Pope has complete power over the available means required to fulfill his charge, to choose and impose them on everyone. This falls within his legitimate domain - discipline is part of this - and within these limits the Pope's authority is unlimited. To oppose him, even in disciplinary matters, is to draw down on oneself the displeasure of God.[14]

SUBMISSION AND OBEDIENCE - To submit to an authority is nothing other than to recognize the sphere of that authority.

The sincerity of this submission is inevitably translated by the obedience which subjects give to the orders emanating from said authority.

Every time that the authority is wielded within the proper

limits of its sphere, the obedience of subjects to said authority in an absolute and unconditional manner is the inevitable corollary. Our Lord tells us this in Saint Luke: "And why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke VI, 46). Fillion adds a note to this passage in the Bible: "When men are sincere, the mouth and the heart act in conjunction; if not, the mouth sometimes expresses what the heart does not feel."

When there is a question of resisting a Pope in the exercise of his office, there is only one hypothesis that can be envisioned to justify the faithful in refusing his orders. This is the situation where the Pope gives orders in a sphere where he has no authority.

But, you may object, what if the Pope commands you to do something evil such as something against Tradition? In such circumstances should one not disobey him? St. Paul did so with St. Peter, and Peter himself did not exclude the Pope when he declared along with the other Apostles that "it is necessary to obey God rather than man" (Acts V, 29).

Absolutely not! A Catholic cannot even envisage such a supposition because it is contrary to the faith. The Vicar of Christ in his function as Pope, invested with the Authority of his Master, is incapable of commanding anything that would lead the Church into sin or that would induce a break with Tradition. When you invoke St. Peter's declaration before the Sanhedrin and the conduct of St. Paul in Antioch to justify your comportment with regard to the popes of Vatican II, you demonstrate your ignorance or your bad faith, as well as your contempt for the faithful who have placed their confidence in you, a confidence that you take advantage of.

Certainly the teaching of the Apostles – one must obey God rather than man – also applies to the Pope, but only in special circumstances such as when he gives a command which is sinful while acting as a private person, or as the temporal head of Vatican City. In such circumstances it is better to obey God than man, even if the man in question is the Pope. But the command of the Apostles in no way involves the Vicar of Christ, because Christ has promised to assist him at all times lest he fail in his function as Peter.

The incident at Antioch (Gal. II, 11–14) has greater significance than either your ignorance or bad faith would suggest. In point of fact, St. Paul did not disobey St. Peter, since the latter did not give any command.

When he writes: "When Cephas came to Antioch, I withstood

him to the face," this should not be understood in the sense that your Society does when it opposes the formal orders of the popes of Vatican II. In this situation the Apostle to the Gentiles only wished to say that he profited from Peter's coming to Antioch to tell him a few homely truths face to face. Before the Judaisers "Cephas [i.e., Peter] dissimulated" with respect to Jewish observances, while habitually following the decision which he had made in Jerusalem and which he had communicated to the brothers in Antioch (cf. Acts XV, 23), namely that he himself lived in the manner of the gentiles. Paul, who did not think he should ask Peter for authorization to make a trial of Tradition, used this meeting to publicly reproach him for his dissimulation.

#### PONTIFICAL INFALLIBILITY

Above all, it is because you are fearful of papal infallibility that you refuse to recognize what it is that the Lord wishes of us.[15]

You are afraid of it because you have entrapped yourselves in a sophism.

It is clear that, for a Catholic, a doctrinal document or a liturgical rite covered with the charism of pontifical infallibility must be accepted. Such things must be accepted without any question because our faith assures us that they cannot contain any error and that they cannot place our faith in any danger.

Unfortunately, it is a fact, and one that St. Thomas Aquinas assures us of, that no principle can be held in the face of contrary facts. The new "mass" has a character which is frankly Lutheran. It places the faith in danger and makes the eucharistic celebration most doubtful, not to say totally and unequivocally invalid.

Now, in regard to this issue, if you had the Catholic faith, you would understand that a rite which departs in an impressive fashion from the theology of the Mass as defined by the Council of Trent and places the faith in danger, clearly demonstrates that the person responsible for promulgating it is not a true Pope. The Pope is of necessity infallible in such a situation. Unfortunately, your faith with regard to the infallibility of the magisterium is not Catholic. This is why you have fallen back on a garbled reasoning. You have said to yourselves: "This new rite should be rejected because it places the faith in danger. But we should not be scandalized by this, because the promulgation of liturgical rites is not covered by the charism of infallibility." Your founder has even stated

that he does not know who the author of this rite is. By such devious arguments, you thought that you might, without compromising yourselves, refuse the edicts of the pope while continuing to recognize his authority.

Consistent with this, all your efforts are extended, not to defend the doctrine of pontifical infallibility which is badly battered and bruised by modernists and many of the traditionalists, but rather to limit it as much as possible.[17]

I ask you to reconsider this privilege granted by our Lord and to become Catholic with regard to this fundamental teaching.

When Jesus revealed to Simon, the son of John, that he was to be made Peter, He particularly stressed that He wished him to be, and indeed, that He had rendered him unshakable.

Unshakable with regard to what? With regard to the faith.

This is so much the case that He also revealed to him that He "Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Matt. XVI, 16), had especially prayed for him "that his faith fail not" (Luke XXII, 32).

You should know that the holy Church which Christ founded is quite literally established on the faith. Is not the faith "the root and foundation of justification?" Without the faith there would be no faithful, and consequently no Church.

The Church is essentially the house of the faith (Gal. VI, 10). She is also "the pillar and foundation of the truth" (I Tim. III, 15).

The Master has provided an unshakable assistance for this "house of the faith" and "pillar of the truth." He wished the Church to be established on a rock so that it would continue to exist throughout all time. This is why He established the Church on the Pope: "and upon this Rock/Peter, I will build MY Church" (Matt. XVI, 18).

Without an unshakable foundation, which is to say, without infallibility, the Church would inevitably disintegrate into an infinite number of sects. The infallibility of the Pope is thus clearly a constituent element that is essential to Peter.

In the Church which Christ established, there is no such thing as a pope who, in his function as Peter, is not both unshakable and infallible. If, as you contend, Peter was

unshakable only very rarely, once or twice in a century, and apart from this was wavering, uncertain and dubious in his ordinary and daily teaching, the Church built upon him would have been – I do not say rapidly and dangerously shaken – but rather totally destroyed long ago.

But you have distorted this dogma so that for you it guarantees the infallibility of the Pope only when he is correct, while holding that he can be in error the rest of the time. And this is why you recognize each of the popes of Vatican II, whom you have justly called "antichrists," to be true Vicars of Christ despite the fact that they have publicly and officially continually professed the worst possible errors for over twenty years. And even more, as a result of this distortion, you have no hesitation in being in communion with these popes in matters pertaining to the faith – and this to the degree that you expel from your Society anyone who fails to celebrate the holy Mass "una cum famulo tuo Papa NOSTRO Joanne Paulo."

For the sake of those among you who still retain a "sensus Ecclesiae" and who accept the principle that "once Rome has spoken, the issue is settled" ("Roma locuta est, causa finita"), I shall terminate my discussion of this doctrinal point by quoting two Roman sources:

"As often, therefore, as it is declared on the authority of this teaching [Magisterium] that this or that is contained in the deposit of divine revelation, it must be believed by everyone as true.[19] If it could in any way be false, an evident contradiction follows; for then God Himself would be the author of error in man." (Leo XIII, "Satis Cognitum")

"The Magisterium of the Church established here below by the design of God to perpetually maintain the deposit of revealed truths intact, and to assure their knowledge among men is exercised EACH AND EVERY DAY BY THE ROMAN PONTIFF and the bishops in communion with him." (Pius XI, "Mortalium Animos")

Boulenger summarizes this classic doctrine in his "Manuel d'apologetique" in the following terms (page 399): "The ordinary and universal magisterium is the mode of teaching utilized by the pope and his bishops AT ANY TIME and in every place. When our Lord said to His apostles: 'Go forth and teach all the nations,' He did not limit their powers to any given time or place. The pope and the bishops must therefore exercise their function as doctors, NOT ONLY AT RARE INTERVALS AND UNDER SOLEMN CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT EVERYWHERE AND ALWAYS." [20]

This is what the popes have to say about this Catholic

doctrine.

## THE POSSIBILITY OF A POPE FAILING INTO THE SIN OF HERESY OR SCHISM.

Even though he is the Vicar of Christ, even though he is invested with His authority, the Pope is not a robot. God respects his liberty. He retains his personality and remains a man who is as such a sinner.[21] Despite the sublimity of his functions and the grandeur of his privileges, he is not permanently established in a state of grace. Like the rest of us, he must work out his salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. II, 12). Like you and I, he carries the treasure of his graces and his privileges in an earthen vessel (II Cor., IV, 7). All this is to say that even if he is Peter, and even if he is responsible in his function as pope, the man that he remains can, in private, fall into any sin whatsoever, not even excluding those sins which offend against the faith or against unity.

This belief in the capacity of the Pope to sin has always been admitted by the Church. Consider the Litany of the Saints. The fact that we beseech God to preserve the Apostolic Prelate in the holy faith is proof positive that, for the Church, the Pope is not preserved from defecting from the faith.

For the Pope, as for simple priests, even the gravest of sins do not force him out of the Church or in any way impede his ministry.[22] However, if he sins against the faith, he departs from the Church just like any other heretic.

If he is separated from the Mystical Body of Christ, if he is not any longer a member of this Body, it is impossible that he should be the head of this Body.

Because of his sin he is separated from Christ and as a result Christ withdraws His Authority and His assistance from him. From this point forth the only aspect of the papacy that said individual retains is the fact that he occupies the Holy See. He does this until the Church declares that he has fallen from his high estate.

Let us remember that the Pope can only fall into heresy as a private person; never in his official teaching. How can we know, when he is teaching, whether or not he is still in the Church? How can we know whether the error which he professes is only a mistake as opposed to the formal sin of heresy? How can we know whether he remains a true pope, or whether he is only such in name and title?

In general, apart from the spontaneous admission of culpability or the intervention of a higher authority which forces him to confess his erroneous beliefs, one cannot know whether a person who professes an error is a formal heretic or not.

Is there any possible exception to this rule? Yes, there is one and that is the Pope.

As you know, in this world there is no authority above that of the Pope. The Pope, who is responsible only to God, cannot be judged by any human person. This being the case, one might well believe that, should such an unfortunate thing happen [i.e., should the pope be a formal heretic, ed.], there would be no remedy for the problem. But such is not the case. The faith is much too important for God to have neglected to provide an efficacious remedy against such a disaster.

For the Pope, as with anyone, heresy is first of all an "internal act." It is only after he gives public expression to the heresy that it becomes known. But in reality, the unfortunate heretic is separated from God from the moment that he refuses to believe a single truth that belongs to the faith. As a result, in the case of a pope, he is no longer such. Being separated from Christ, Christ withdraws His Authority and His Assistance from him.

All this takes place secretly within his soul. As long as he gives no public expression to his crime, no one can know of it. There is no greater tragedy for the Church than to unknowingly be under the leadership of a pope who is in fact not any longer a pope.

Fortunately however, the faith reassures us. It reminds us who the real head of the Church is. He who has been the head from the beginning, and who has never ceased to direct the Church is Jesus Christ Himself, "I am with you all days, till the end of time." (Matt. XVIII, 20)

Even though it is hidden, the sin of His Vicar does not escape Him. What arrangements did He make so that the faithful might be warned and know with certitude that a given pope is no longer His Vicar, and that he no longer is endowed with His Authority?

When such a situation arises, two hypotheses can be envisioned.

FIRST HYPOTHESIS: Unless one is dealing with a modernist

who completely hides his purpose in order to remain within the Church in order to foster its "evolution," a heretic generally, at least in the beginning, is convinced that the truth he denies is not a revealed truth. It follows from this that, especially if he is in a high position which gives him great authority, he will not hesitate to impose his new ideas and take appropriate measures within his power in order to prepare people's minds to accept his point of view. In such a situation, his teaching will rapidly become, if not frankly heretical, at least more or less dubious. The Church, which is to say the simple faithful along with the clergy, always has the right to interrogate the Pope in order to clearly understand the nature of his dubious teaching. Even though there is no higher authority capable of judging the Pope, any member of the Church is fully within his rights in interrogating him. Christ established the Pope in his function in order to "confirm the faith of his brothers." And when asked, the Pope is obliged to respond. He must clearly profess true doctrine and frankly condemn errors opposed to it.

If the Pope refuses to respond and if some of the faithful in the Church begin to ask themselves questions about his orthodoxy, he is at least suspect of heresy and becomes, because of his culpable silence, a dubious pope. The believing Church, which has no power over the pope, once it becomes certain about a dubious pope, can go so far as to judge and depose him.

It is obvious that in the believing Church, it is the function of the faithful hierarchy, the cardinals, patriarchs and titular bishops, to interrogate the Pope and to initiate a procedure for judging a dubious pope.

SECOND HYPOTHESIS: The heresy of the Pope is hidden and, owing to a variety of circumstances, the Church is unaware of the fact. In that case, as the world sees it, one would think that it is all over for the Church. According to the judgement of the world that is, but not according to that of the faith.

Our Lord said, "I shall be with you always till the end of time." As a result, when the tragedy of a heretical pope occurred at Vatican II, in a Christendom anesthetized by laicism, liberalism, naturalism and a false understanding of charity, our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Head of the Church, who is incapable of abandoning His Spouse, did not fail to come to her aid. Instead of assisting and protecting THIS pope who was no longer His Vicar from all error, He blinded him. What followed is that Paul VI solemnly promulgated, among other things, the new doctrine about religious liberty which contradicted the teaching of faith on this same subject.[23]

In so doing, Christ allowed even the most myopic, providing they were of good will, to clearly see that His Vicar had lost his authority.

## II - WHAT THE FAITHFUL CATHOLICS EXPECTED AND STILL EXPECT FROM YOU

Clearly, those of the faithful for whom religion is nothing more than a collection of practices demand of you, as they do of us, only the Mass, the Sacraments and doctrinal instruction. But those Catholics who live their faith intelligently demand much more than that. They also demand doctrinal justifications of our stand, a consistent behavior and above all a confession of faith on the most disputed points.[24]

### CATHOLIC DOCTRINAL JUSTIFICATIONS OF OUR RIGHTS

I have already explained this. Without Catholic doctrinal justification, you will lead the faithful who follow you in your own immorality and you will eventually have to give account for such actions to God.

There is no question but that, like most of the publishers of traditional journals and bulletins, you excel in denouncing the scandals, errors and heresies of the Vatican II popes and bishops. But in discussing the repeated acts and scandals against the faith, not once have you dared to draw the conclusion that faith imposes on us. To cite but one typical example of your publications, consider the book "Peter, Loveth thou me?" It is absolutely typical of the way in which you operate.[25]

Another fact, and one we cannot state without deploring it, is that despite your seminaries, your convents, and your University in Paris, despite several hundred priests and five bishops within your organization, you have never proved yourselves capable of producing a single serious doctrinal work that confounds the protagonists of the new Church and their formal heresies and justifies our resistance.

This absence of any justification is a very serious matter: you pretend to recognize the Authority of the reigning pope and his bishops in the dioceses in which you are established; you even go so far as to exclude from your Society those who refuse to recognize them (Declaration of 8-11-1979) and, at the same time, you exercise your ministry against the express wishes of these bishops and the pope. Is this a

logical way to behave?

And what is worse, in the attempt to justify your irrational behavior which is in radical opposition with your repeated declarations of allegiance to the authorities of Vatican II, you try to convince those who are scandalized by such a behavior that it is in conformity with Catholic practice. If one believes what you say, the Doctors and Saints of the Church have previously acted in this manner, and have even gone so far as to recommend it as appropriate.

In order to support these claims, you do not hesitate to turn some texts round to suit you. I have demonstrated this above with regard to the incident at Antioch and the words of Peter.

In the 3-4 issue of "Cahiers de Cassiciacum," Father Bernard Lucien published a study on a passage from St. Robert Bellarmine's "De Romano Pontifice" (L. II, ch. 29), which is your favorite text. Jacques Ogliastro quoted it again in the December 1991 issue of "Le Chardonnet." Read Father Lucien's study and you will come to see how dishonest it is for you to continue to refer to the authority of Saint Robert Bellarmine in attempting to justify your uncatholic behavior.[27]

It is obvious that none of the theologians and saints whose authority you invoke ever found themselves confronted with such a problem. How then is it possible for you to point to their conduct as a source of support for your own?

Impossible! Neither St. Thomas Aquinas, nor Saint Robert Bellarmine, nor Saint Bernard, nor Cajetan, Suarez or Journet, nor any other Catholic author that you may wish to quote, CAN SUPPLY YOU WITH A SINGLE TEXT THAT AUTHORIZES THE FAITHFUL TO RESIST THE FORMAL ORDERS OF THE INFALLIBLE MAGISTERIUM.[28] And IT IS PRECISELY THIS ISSUE WHICH IS AT THE HEART OF THE PRESENT CRISIS.

Consider the Conciliar declarations "Unitatis Redintegratio" on ecumenism, "Dignitatis Humanae" on religious liberty, the Constitution "Sacrosanctum Concilium" on the liturgy, or the "Missale Romanum" which promulgated the new mass. Their official promulgation by Paul VI makes them part of the infallible Magisterium.[29] And in such matters it is impossible for the Catholic faith to even envision the possibility of resisting them, assuming a true pope promulgates them. It is thus dishonest to pretend that some saints have counseled, or even practiced such. As I have explained above when discussing the nature and true ends of the Church, within

the limits of orthodoxy, the Authority of the Pope in the Church is limitless and it is absolutely necessary – our salvation depends upon it – for us to submit to him.

If, despite everything, you continue with good faith to believe that you are permitted to disobey the formal orders of a reigning pope because [you believe] the Saints have done so before you, I would call to your attention to:

- the express judgement of Popes Boniface VIII and Pius XI with regard to this issue as cited on page 58.
- the rule of conduct given by Pius XII so that we might know how to act with regard to hitherto controversial matters: "If the supreme Pontiffs in their acts, after due consideration, express an opinion on a hitherto controversial matter, it is clear to all that this matter, according to the mind and will of the same Pontiffs, cannot any longer be considered a question for free discussion among theologians." (Denziger 2313).

No indeed! Reread these passages with care. Clearly, in issues such as these, a Catholic is not permitted to oppose a true pope, and it is dishonest to claim that the Saints have acted in such a manner.

Quite the contrary. If, as is the case since Vatican II, the faith, or rather the word of God which we adhere to by virtue of faith, commands us to oppose the reigning pope, it assures us at one and the same time – for God cannot contradict Himself – that this "pope" which the faith commands us to oppose is not a true pope and is not invested with the Authority of Christ. In a word, that he is not Christ's Vicar on earth.[30]

#### A COHERENT AND CONSISTENT WAY OF BEHAVING

Not only is your manner of behaving scandalous, but it furthers the subversion. How is it that you do not realize that you are giving support to those who would destroy the Church?

Nothing that you can say or write about the leaders of the false Church in any way restricts their activities. On the contrary, knowing Catholic doctrine better than you think they do, these leaders only fear one thing, which, as Father Calmel pointed out, is "the uncovering of the fact that they have no Authority."

They fear this even more because, from the moment that the

believing Church becomes aware of the fact that the popes of Vatican II no longer possess the Authority of Christ, their "false church," to once again turn to Father Calmel's explanation, "will crumble into dust because its principal strength is the result of its intrinsic error being taken for the truth, and not as yet having been disavowed from on high." [31]

Among the numerous declarations your founder has made, I would ask you to recall a passage from a letter written on October 6, 1978, just prior to the conclave that followed the death of John Paul I, and which he addressed to some forty Cardinals including Cardinal Wojtyla, then Archbishop of Cracow. It clearly brings out the scandalous inconsistency of your behavior: "A pope worthy of the name and a true successor of Peter cannot declare that he will dedicate himself to the application of the Council and its reforms. By so doing, he makes it clear that he has broken with all his predecessors [32] and especially with the Council of Trent." [33]

Have you taken the time to seriously consider this statement? Do you not realize how foolish you look since the election of Wojtyla? He at least has made no secret of his intentions. He at least acts in a manner which is consistent with his convictions.

From his very first Encyclical, he made it clear that he intended to completely apply the decisions of Vatican II, "without letting himself be restricted by these documents."

And since then he has not ceased to untiringly repeat his belief that because "during the Council the Church became more deeply aware of her own true nature and her real mission" (8-12-1978), because we have seen "a new phase in the autorealization of the Church in accordance with the times in which it has been given us to live." ("Dives et Misericordia," VIII, 15), and as The Holy Spirit has spoken through the mouth of the Fathers, "we propose to ourselves as our principal task to bring about the teaching of this Great Council." (O.c.I, 1).

Beyond this, John Paul II declared in his "Redemptor Hominis" that "John XXIII and Paul VI constitute a stage on which I desire to base myself as a point of departure from which, if I may so express myself, I desire to continue, along with John Paul I, towards the future." (II,3)

I do not desire to raise doubts about the intentions of Mgr Lefebvre. But how can one explain his failure to draw the obvious conclusions which the repeated statements of the individual elected imposed on him? Nevertheless, it is a fact

that he did not draw the proper conclusions. Was he truly convinced of what he had written to the Cardinals?

The Pope is the infallible organ of Tradition. In breaking with all his [pre-Vatican II] predecessors, John Paul II clearly manifested to Archbishop Lefebvre that he had left the Church and established himself in schism. Is it temerarious for one to raise doubts about the sincerity of a person who, knowing this, continued asking favors from a schismatic materially established on the Chair of Peter?

After all the straightforward declarations of John Paul II, how is it that your founder did not realize that this "pope", despite his election, was not and could not be "a true successor of Peter?"

The fact is that Mgr Lefebvre did not draw the conclusions which honor and the faith demanded of him. And this calculated abstention on his part authorizes one to have some doubts about him.

And I need hardly tell you that not only did the Archbishop not draw the appropriate conclusions which circumstances imposed on him, but, against all justice, he expelled from his Society those of his children for whom he was responsible, who believed their superior was sincere, and who had concluded from his letter to the Cardinals that John Paul II was not a true pope.[34]

Considering all this, how is it that you are not ashamed? How is it that those of you who persist in behaving in a manner which undermines the Catholic resistance are not blushing? If you had even a modicum of common sense, you would realize that you are traitors to the cause of the Church, that you are acting in a manner which can only profit those who are openly aiming at her destruction. It must be that you are lacking in all judgement if you do not see that to affirm and everywhere insist upon the legitimacy of the popes of Vatican II is playing into the hands of the enemy.

In the eyes of the world and in the eyes of Christians, you give recognition to the fact that they have an Authority which they do not have.

You bring discredit upon the true resisters, those whose behavior is consistent, those who submit themselves to all the requisites of the Catholic faith, and you represent them as "extremists."

And who can such an attitude benefit? To your shame I

shall say it again. It can only benefit the individual whom your founder, in a moment of lucidity, saw clearly with the eyes of faith, recognized and declared could not be "a true pope," and in another moment of clarity very justly labelled an "antichrist."

If ridicule could kill, your Society would have disappeared a long time ago. But no, ridicule does not destroy. In an era when the Prince of this world is reigning, his servants have a long life.

And so we come to the confession of the faith and the terrible responsibility of Mgr. Lefebvre and all of you with regard to this issue.[35]

#### THE CONFESSION OF THE FAITH

We owe God a great debt. As the Apostle put it: "For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received?" (I Cor. IV, 7)

Have you asked yourselves why God has preserved us from adhering to the novelties of Vatican II, why God has led us to resist these "popes"?

The last time that your founder came to my chapel in Tours to confirm the children was on the 21st of April in 1979. At that time I reminded him why God had chosen him. I said, "We are grateful to you, Monseigneur, for coming to confirm the children and for giving us priests, which makes it possible for Catholic worship to continue after us. But God did not choose you for that only reason. God chose you especially to confess the faith."

I also dared to tell him that I saw the finger of God in the choice of his person: He had chosen him in order that divine action might be more manifest in the Catholic resistance.

In effect, as a result of the functions which he had exercised, your founder was as well known in the Roman curia as he was among the French-speaking hierarchy. Everyone was aware of his attachment to the Holy See and of his gentle nature. Seeing him stand up against the pope and against the Council forced those who observed him to discover, through his actions, the reasons why God had called him and why He continued to sustain him.

#### THE OBJECT OF OUR WITNESS

During all the great crises which the Church has sustained, God has never failed to call up individuals who stood up and bore witness against the innovators. Responding to the confidence which God placed in them, these confessors have repulsed all the novelties and confounded their authors by proclaiming the faith. They knew that this virtue is the shield against which all the fiery darts of the most wicked one are extinguished (Eph. VI, 16).

God raised up Mgr Lefebvre, as He has ourselves, in order to beat back the prevailing heresy by clearly proclaiming the faith which is attacked by it.

What is then the dominant heresy which threatens to overwhelm us in the wake of Vatican II?

Jean Madiran has designated the nature of this heresy from the very first line of the introduction to his book "The Heresy of the Twentieth Century," stating that "it is the bishops'." He quickly clarifies this by adding "It is not that they are its inventors, it is that they are its agents." [36]

What does this heresy consist in?

In the fact that the Roman Church is no longer considered to be the Mother and Teacher of all the churches – "Mater and Magistra omnium ecclesiarum" –, but only as one church among the other churches.

"So-called Roman theology was more and more considered to be only one school of theology among others, and by no means the best, for it was an old fashioned school, based on scholasticism and impregnated with a juridical mind. Encyclicals were considered to be a parochial product of this particular school of theology, and as such open to debate. In this, the bishops and doctors have forsworn themselves, they have violated their solemn oaths by holding that the Church of Rome is not "the Mother and Teacher of all the churches." (O.c. page 16)

One did not have to wait very long for the results of such an attitude. "There was no longer any communion between the bishops and the Holy See. In recent years, especially after 1950, the bishops felt that communion had been broken by the Holy See – a prisoner of a theological school which had a particular juridical outlook which had been bypassed by history. They felt it was incumbent on the Holy See to once again achieve communion with the episcopate.

"The entire Second Vatican Ecumenical Council was

conducted by bishops who entertained this point of view." (O.c. p. 19).

Since "the Council of our century," the situation is even worse. The pontiffs of Vatican II also have made it clear that, even with regard to issues upon which the Church has spoken in an irreformable fashion, they are no longer in communion with the "Mother and Teacher" which existed prior to Vatican II.

And thus it is that GOD HAS CHOSEN US IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT BE WITNESSES TO THE TRUTH OF HIS WORD IN FAVOR OF THE CHURCH OF PETER AND AGAINST THE HERESY OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

### III. - MGR. LEFEBVRE AND WITNESSING TO THE FAITH

If it was easy to resist during the reign of Paul VI about whom very little was pleasing, and whom almost everything could be objected to, the situation has become more difficult after the election of Wojtyla.

As soon as this individual was elected to the Holy See, a dialogue was reestablished between Rome and Ecône. From this time onwards, the Archbishop preferred to use diplomacy rather than standing by the humble but courageous profession of the faith.

Instead of adopting the courageous attitude of St. Paul at Antioch, instead of "resisting him to his face because he was reprehensible" in that he was continuing the work of his immediate predecessors, instead of demanding that he confirm the Church in the faith (Luke XII, 32), Mgr. Lefebvre preferred to beg leave for practicing what nobody, "even though he was [an apostle or] an angel from heaven," can forbid us to practice, namely, fidelity to Tradition. (Gal. I, 8)

"Most Holy Father, please allow us to give Tradition a try" became the leitmotif of all his requests.

In so doing, the Archbishop started to walk along the road which led to the abandonment of the cause for which we were prepared to battle, and for which God had chosen him.

How is it possible that this Catholic Bishop failed to realize that he dishonored himself by placing himself in the position of begging the individual who was destroying the faith for authorization to be faithful to the promises of his baptism, his confirmation, his ordination, and his consecration?

## THE CATHOLIC RESISTANCE

You seem to ignore the fact that the resistance of Catholics to Vatican II was not the work of Mgr. Lefebvre. It was established without him. When the Archbishop entered the field, the battle had long been established. It had already been organized, especially in France, in Germany and in Mexico. We had even created an international secretariat in Rome entitled P.E.R.C.[37]

- Where was the Archbishop when, along with Father Coache, we led the March to Rome and when we stayed up all night praying under the windows of Paul VI in St. Peter's Square? He was among the observers.

- Who were the people who for the first time filled the great Hall of Mutuality in Paris in order to broadcast to the world the existence of opposition to Vatican II and to demonstrate that our Catholic demands were well-founded? Not Mgr. Lefebvre. It is true that he supported us by being present, but only as a listener, and without daring to declare himself openly for fear of compromising himself with his colleagues.

- Even that famous day when he spoke out in Lille was organized by us. Your founder did not wish to be involved. Notified by Mr. Paul Lietar of Tourcoing that the Archbishop intended to celebrate a private traditional Mass for his family and some friends, it was I who intervened and insisted that he allow us to organize a large gathering at Lille. As usual, he only agreed when pushed to the wall. And if we were able in less than 15 days to gather the crowds that acclaimed him and made the people in the Vatican tremble, it was only because we had an international organization capable of doing this.

The Archbishop did not commit himself to the resistance before it been sufficiently organized and developed and was already a significant force. At that point, taking advantage of the fact that he could contribute status as a bishop to the movement, he moved to take it over for his own benefit or, if you prefer, for the benefit of his work and that of the Society.

Jesus warned us: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." (Luke XVIII, 24)

As long as the Archbishop had need of us and our organization, I was welcome in Ecône and the seminarians who subscribed to "Forts dans la Foi" did not have to read my review in secret. Unfortunately, these things changed with the

entrance into Ecône of enormous numbers of M.J.C.F.[38] members. From then on, the liberals rapidly became a majority and the heart of your founder began to lean in their direction. After that, those who stood firm were obliged to be careful whenever they met me or read my review. You can ask, among others, Father Philippe Laguerie whether or not I am exaggerating in stating this.

Apart from the conclusions which I came to regarding the total invalidity of the new mass and the absolute manner in which I forbade the faithful to assist at it, Archbishop Lefebvre, while not sanctioning my position, neither opposed my analysis of the new rite nor my demonstration of the heresy, schism and apostasy of Paul VI.

It was in his presence, during the course of a priestly meeting at the House Lacordaire at Flavigny, presided over by him, that I made my two analyses public.

After the first was presented, Father Coache declared before all those present that he could not accept the conclusions that logically followed from my analysis, that A MASS SAID WITH THE NEW RITE OF PAUL VI WAS NOT AND COULD NOT BE VALID. When I asked the Archbishop what he thought, he immediately replied:

- "Your study is a serious piece of work. If I were you, I would send it to the Holy Office in order that they might make a proper determination."

- "As for me," replied Father Guerard des Lauriers, "I would give you a different piece of advice. I know the secretary in the Holy Office who will receive your study. He will immediately throw it in the garbage. If you wish Rome to take it seriously, you should publish it."

- "The good Father is probably correct," remarked the Archbishop with a smile.

I presented my second analysis, which concluded with the heresy and schism of Paul VI, at the Seminary at Ecône. I announced that I would send this study to all the Cardinals and Patriarchs of the Holy Church and that I intended to make it public at a press conference in Rome. Once again, the Archbishop made no comment and assured me of his prayers.

The press conference was, as planned, given in Rome on November 19, 1976. More than 19 Italian daily papers were represented, and subsequently the Archbishop continued to be friendly with me and to welcome me at his table when I visited with him. (Cf. "Fortes in Fide," No. 8, pp. 24-25)

## THE ARCHBISHOP'S ABOUT-FACE

A little before his famous declaration of November 8, 1979, things began to change and your founder distanced himself from me and all those involved in the true resistance. What had happened to justify his new way of behaving and his fratricidal declaration?

From the moment he decided to again negotiate with the leaders of the new Church, Mgr Lefebvre, being fully aware of my position on the legitimacy of our Catholic resistance, was careful not to let me into the secret. I knew of this as a result of public rumors.

In 1979 the feast of St. Pius X fell on a Sunday. I took advantage of this to reassure the faithful in my chapel about the intentions of the Archbishop. I subsequently published this homily in the review for the sake of my readers, but also to remind your Superior that "he who sups with the devil better use a long spoon."

Unfortunately, the spoon your founder used was all too short. As a result, he obtained nothing and became an accomplice to subversion.

It is easy to understand this. Our Lord warned us about this when He said, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." (Luke XVI, 8)

Since the Archbishop asked to be allowed to make a trial of Tradition, it is clear that he was not sure of his rights in continuing to do so. Since he made the request to these individuals, it is clear that he recognized their authority. In this context it is evident that one of the first prerequisites which could never be discussed with those he addressed was the recognition of

- the legitimacy of the reigning pope,
- the validity of the new rite for the public saying of Mass promulgated by his predecessor Paul VI,
- and the accepting of the Second Vatican Council.

The Archbishop was able to assure his questioners without lying that he had never said that the pope was a heretic, that he had always maintained that a mass said with the new rite of Paul VI, if celebrated with dignity, was valid, and that within his Society no priest was ever authorized to celebrate the holy Sacrifice other than "una cum famulo tuo papa NOSTRO Joanne Paulo."

Therefore it was only natural that the post-Conciliar hierarchy should demand as proof of his sincerity that your founder should publicly keep his distance from those who disagreed with these positions. That explains why, without any warning, the Archbishop made his fratricidal declaration of November 8, 1979, and stabbed the Catholic resistance in the back.[39]

Chosen by God to confess the faith on a point which was most frequently denied, Archbishop Lefebvre fled the field.

Think back on the question which God put to the Archbishop through the lips of Cardinal Seper, a question which was intended to facilitate that confessing of the faith which He expected from him: "Is it possible for a rite, especially that of the Mass, promulgated by a Sovereign Pontiff, to place the faith of the faithful in danger?"

The response of the Archbishop was so carefully worded that the Cardinal did not feel obliged to insist. He had just tested him, and it was obvious that the "new Athanasius" was much more a nuisance than a danger. All one had to do was let things take their course. It was only a question of time.[40]

#### IV – THE BETRAYAL OF THE CATHOLIC RESISTANCE BY ECONE

As I pointed out above, Archbishop Lefebvre, like us, was chosen by God TO WITNESS TO THE TRUTH OF HIS WORD IN DEFENCE OF THE CHURCH OF PETER, with the grace and the authority that derives from his episcopacy. God desired that a bishop should speak up to fight the heresy of the 20TH century, and it was Archbishop Lefebvre whom He chose for that purpose.

FOR IT IS PRECISELY THIS WITNESSING THAT GOD DEMANDS OF US. HE EXPECTS IT BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE. AND IT IS THIS WITNESSING THAT YOUR FOUNDER REFUSED TO GIVE, AND WHICH YOU, FOLLOWING IN HIS FOOTSTEPS, ALSO REFUSE TO GIVE.

Like him, you do not want to clearly state that God the Father granted Christ's request that the faith of Peter should not fail (Cf. John XI, 41-42).

Like him, you refuse to declare that these popes who for well over twenty years have officially taught heretical doctrines are not and cannot be real Vicars of Christ.

Like him, you lack the courage of the faith to declare that these popes have themselves provided the proof that they are not invested with Pontifical Authority.

Like him, you do not dare to declare that God, in commanding us to resist them, makes it clear that he has not accepted them as Vicars of His Son.

Do not think that I am trying to argue for some personal opinion. It would suffice for you to calmly reflect before God, who will judge you as He has already judged Archbishop Lefebvre, in order to realize that what I am saying is fact.

Of all the errors of Vatican II, which one predominates? Can you not see that it is precisely the one which I have pointed out? Whether it is the issue of religious liberty, or the total inversion of the Church's teaching about the liturgy, the Mystical Body of Christ, ecumenism, communism, or a host of other novelties matters not, the condemnation of each one of these errors is to be found in pre-existing Pontifical documents.[41]

But these documents have no authority if one does not admit that they derive their authority FROM THE MOTHER AND TEACHER OF ALL CHURCHES.

This is where the heresy of the twentieth century comes in. One no longer wishes to accept this dogma. One refuses to accept this teaching for what it is: the proximate rule of the faith.

This is the dominant error, the greatest crime of the popes of Vatican II. Having succumbed to the heresy of the twentieth century, they, like the bishops, have perjured themselves. And like them, the popes of Vatican I are no longer in communion with their predecessors.

Is not your Society also contaminated by this same heresy? Do you, like loyal sons of the Church, accept the infallibility of the ordinary Magisterium? Listen to the words of Pius XII:

"The magisterium of the Church (he is referring to that teaching which falls into the category of "ordinary") SHOULD BE THE PROXIMATE AND UNIVERSAL NORM OF FAITH for every theologian in matters of faith and morals because Christ the Lord entrusted the entire deposit of faith to it, namely, the Sacred Scriptures and divine Tradition, to be guarded, and preserved, and interpreted; it is not to be thought that what is set down in Encyclical Letters does not demand assent in itself, because in this the popes do not exercise the supreme power of their magisterium. FOR THESE MATTERS ARE TAUGHT BY THE ORDINARY MAGISTERIUM, REGARDING WHICH THE FOLLOWING IS PERTINENT: "HE WHO HEARETH YOU HEARETH ME."[42]

## CONCLUSION

DID ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE PLACE HIS OWN ETERNAL SALVATION AT RISK?

Pardon me for raising this question in such a brutal manner before readers who are not members of your Society. As they will see, this is not a matter of idle curiosity. Before responding, allow me to make a few remarks.

FIRST COMMENT. Like all mortals, Archbishop Lefebvre has come before the Tribunal of God to be judged by One who is as much the fount of infinite Justice as He is of infinite Mercy.

SECOND COMMENT. His eternal status is irrevocably determined. Whatever one may recall, whether it be the most serious sins in his comportment and actions, or the greatest praise and the anticipated canonization on the part of those who consider him to be a saint, is unable to change the judgement of God which has already been rendered. "Homo enim videt ea quae parent, Dominus autem intuetur cor."[41]

THIRD COMMENT. Since the die is cast, why raise the question at all? Some will ask if I have forgotten the recommendation of the ancients that "de mortuis nisi bene?"[44]

This aphorism is a pagan saying inspired by fear. Some were concerned about the dead taking vengeance on those who say bad things about them.

I do not take any pleasure in criticizing Archbishop Lefebvre. My intention is to recall what, with regard to the faith, might have compromised the salvation of his soul. By so doing, those who have been entrapped in his errors will be enlightened and will be able to reassess their position before it is too late. Never forget the statement of the Apostle that God is not mocked (Gal. VI, 7).

FOURTH COMMENT. With regard to the eternal salvation of the Archbishop, even if he knowingly refused the call of God to confess the faith, even if he thought and acted in a manner which was culpable in the eyes of God, it is only by means of divine revelation mediated through the Church that one can know. No individual can know what passed within the depth of his heart before he rendered his soul up to God.

This is why the Church, which well knows that judgement belongs to God alone, has always abstained from making pronouncements about the damnation of any individual, even of

her cruellest persecutors.

On the other hand, she has never hesitated to denounce errors, no matter who affirms them and whether the person is alive or dead, whether held by her children or by others, and whether or not the individual concerned is worthy of praise in other areas. She has always desired that those who become aware of such errors should come to a sane judgement clarified by the faith with regard to them, and that they should in this way safeguard their eternal salvation.

It should be well understood in all that I am about to say that it is only a matter of what might have put his eternal salvation at risk, and not a question of determining the judgement which God has rendered with regard to him.

FIFTH COMMENT. As God is my witness, I ardently hope that God in His great mercy has received the soul of your Founder, and since his death I have prayed for just that.

These precisions are important in discussing.

#### THE REASONS WHICH ALLOW ONE TO BE WORRIED ABOUT THE ETERNAL SALVATION OF ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE'S SOUL

##### THE FIRST REASON: HIS REFUSAL TO CONFESS THE FAITH.

If the refusal to confess the faith is conscious, it is serious sin against the virtue of faith. Now, you know as well as I that theological faith is lost by a single mortal sin against the faith. For, as Leo XIII taught, the nature of the faith is such that nothing is more impossible than to believe one thing while rejecting another. As a result, he adds, He who, even on a single point, refuses his assent to a divinely revealed truth truly rejects them all. ("Satis Cognitum")

One can also deny a revealed truth in an indirect way, and without even doubting that truth. A person who affirms an error in good faith without being aware that his affirmation indirectly denies a revealed truth, is excused from the sin of heresy. But, as you should also know, invincible ignorance does not excuse

- when the matter in question pertains to the duties of one's state in life. The knowledge of doctrine is one of the obligations of the priestly vocation, and "a fortiori" such is true of a bishop, a professor of theology and a religious Superior.

- if one is ignorant as a result of being negligent in

informing oneself of the matter, "a fortiori" when one refuses to be corrected when one's error is pointed out.

In addition, as you well know, it is Christ who chooses who will be a confessor of the faith. It is He who provides the reasons: "ut fructum afferatis et fructus vester maneat" – "that you should bring forth fruit; and your fruit should remain." (John XV, 16) Among these fruits which He expects is that of witnessing: "Eritis mihi testes." "You shall be witnesses unto me." (Acts I, 8) and fidelity to one's vocation. Remember the story of the rich young man (Mark X, 21–27). In their commentaries on this passage the Church Fathers point out how dangerous to one's salvation is the refusal to respond to God's choice.

As I have already pointed out, we have been chosen not only to oppose the heresies of prior ages, heresies long since condemned, but also to oppose the convulsions brought about by Vatican II and the heresy of the twentieth century.

When Satan has received God's authorization to "sift" the Church of His Son like wheat (Luke XXII, 31), to "insert himself even in the highest places." (La Salette),

When Rome has lost the faith and has become the seat of the antichrist (La Salette),

When almost the entire hierarchy has ceased to be in communion with the Church of Rome and Peter, when they have taken to themselves new masters and when they teach new doctrines such as our fathers never knew,

When the abomination of desolation is installed in the holy place<sup>[45]</sup> and the entire patrimony of the Church has been overthrown,

God wishes that we bear witness to His word by supporting the Church of Rome and of Peter. God wishes us to defend our faith before the entire world.

This Church, and only this Church, has never failed and never will fail. This Church and only this Church is guaranteed protection against every error (Luke XXII, 32), for, in the mind of the Master, she is the Mother and Teacher of all the Churches. It is her teaching, her doctrine and her way of worship that we should adhere to if we wish Him to recognize us as His own.

THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD FOR US. THIS IS THE WITNESS WHICH WE SHOULD BEAR. THIS IS THE WITNESS WHICH ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE

REFUSED TO BEAR WITH OBSTINACY.

And in order to avoid responding to this will of God for him, he did not shrink from engaging in the most scandalous contradictions and in the most blatant doctrinal innovations, and he retreated into a most culpable silence.

Allow me to remind you

- of his about-face after the letter to the Cardinals of October 6, 1978, and after the election and declarations of John Paul II,
- of his predilection for a Janus-like pope who is one day the "antichrist," and the next day the "Vicar of Christ,"
- of the principle of "free examination" imposed on all the faithful whom he obliged to personally judge what in the pope's teaching was and was not compatible with Tradition,
- of his denial in the practical order of the infallibility of the ordinary and universal magisterium of the Church,
- of the possibility for the Church to provide the faithful with a rite that was a danger to their faith,
- of his theory which implies that Christ lends his support to the destruction of His Church, by preserving in his status as His Vicar and by being [one hierarchical person] with the individual who is

\* a supporter of that ecumenism which denies one of the most solid doctrines of our faith to the effect that, "outside of the Catholic faith no one can be saved,"

\*\* responsible for the blasphemous and sacrilegious extravaganza at Assisi,

\*\*\* the instigator for the friendly visit to the leaders of the Synagogue of Rome, men who persist in holding that Our Lord Jesus Christ is "a blasphemer, worthy of death." (Matt. XXVI, 65-66)

Not only did Archbishop Lefebvre refuse to bear that witness for which God chose him, but with great offence against justice and charity, he threw out from his Society all those - his sons - who did bear such witness. And further, he publicly separated himself from the true resisters, doing everything to discredit them by labeling them with such pejorative titles as "disobedient," "extremists," "schismatics," and "sectarians animated by a bitter zeal."

In order to make it even clearer that he would have nothing to do with us, he went so far as to allow you to try to destroy our Mass centers by emptying them of the faithful.[47]

And finally, at the time of the consecrations, he forbade Bishop Antonio de Castro Mayer to publicly state at Ecône that the Holy See was lacking a true pope, a pope vested with the Authority of Peter.

As for myself, with regard to witnessing to the faith, I do not hesitate to say, and I would be delighted if you could prove me wrong, that APART FROM PAUL VI WHO DESTROYED EVERYTHING IN THE CHURCH, AND APART FROM HIS SUCCESSORS WHO HAVE CODIFIED HIS "OCTOBER REVOLUTION," NO ONE HAS DONE MORE HARM TO THE CHURCH THAN ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE BY HIS DIVIDING, LIBERALIZING AND STERILIZING OF THE CATHOLIC RESISTANCE.

Obviously, I am aware of the fact that to destroy the patrimony of the Church is a most serious charge. But to consent to this, to divide the resistance to this subversion, to neutralize this resistance by liberalizing it, to attack those who dare to confess that the destructors of the Catholic faith cannot be true popes, is something still more serious. It is, in fact, to be an active accomplice of these destructors." [48]

A SECOND REASON FOR BEING DISTURBED: HIS CONTEMPT FOR THOSE WHO DISAGREED WITH HIS WAY OF THINKING.

This was one of the principal traits of his character. It may well be the basic cause of his failure to bear witness to the faith. Archbishop Lefebvre never accepted the advice of those who did not think just like him. He never tolerated or listened to the objections of those who disagreed with him, even when the most serious issues were involved. Even as early as 1970 when I organized the first conference for the study of doctrinal problems at Tours, he announced that he would not participate if I invited Father Raymond Dulac. This same sectarian mentality governed his behavior with regard to those who left his Society: No longer have anything to do with them, it is all over. I am sure you are aware of the history of the Vulgate Bible of Sixtus V. This pope had set up a commission of specialists to revise the translation of the Bible. As he was the pope, he thought that he had greater wisdom than those that were his advisors. And as such, he imposed his point of view on the translation of each obscure passage without tolerating any contradiction. The result was as expected. His advisors approved everything without any objections. His translation was found to be so full of errors that his successor could hardly wait to burn it. This example serves to remind us that even a pope is not dispensed from the obligation of listening to those who think differently than he does. It sheds light on the consequences of Archbishop Lefebvre's strange ways of acting.

He too only picked his advisors from among his admirers: he could not bear to be contradicted. Who then can be surprised about what has happened, that the final result is not Catholic.

And yet warnings were not lacking such as were sufficient to prevent him from going off the path. Without mentioning others who extended the same charity to him, you know how often I quoted to him the passage from Ezechiel III, 17-21 on the obligation that I had to warn him in so far as I believed him to be in error. Never - not once - did he listen to what I had to say.

#### A THIRD REASON FOR CONCERN: HIS LACK OF CHARITY.

He was convinced that I was mistaken, and I repeatedly pointed this out to him. Now an error with regard to matters of the faith could not but place my eternal salvation at risk. Thus he was duty bound to correct me all the more so since I asked him to do this. In order to induce him to do so I repeatedly called the passage from Ezechiel to his attention. Never did he have the charity to discuss this with me.

I was not by any means the only individual excluded from his charity. The faithful that had been misled by the new church were also excluded from it. You know even better than I the perpetual requests he made to his "pope." To what end? Not in order to get him to ban the new rites which exposed the faithful to the danger of losing their faith, but only to obtain the privilege of retaining the ancient ways for his Society.

How could he accept the use of these new rites which were a danger to the faith for other Catholics? Had he received some dispensation from God which allowed him not to love those outside his Society?

St. John is quite clear. The most certain way of determining the sincerity of our love for God is by means of loving our neighbors. "He who pretends to love God whom he does not see, and who does not love his brother whom he does see, is a liar." (I John, IV, 20) And St. Paul assures us that our most brilliant works, our trials and our virtues, all these are useless for our salvation if we lack charity (I Cor. XIII).

#### A FOURTH REASON FOR CONCERN: HIS DISREGARD OF THE WORD OF GOD.

To recognize the popes of Vatican II is to recognize that Christ has made them His Vicars, and has invested them with His

Authority.

At the same time, in spite of the command and threat of the Holy Spirit reported by St. Paul (Rom. XIII, 1-2), to publicly resist with obstinacy the clear and specific orders of these popes, to refuse to obey their express commands and to ostensibly disregard their sanctions even though they are legally promulgated, is nothing other than to disregard the Word of God, to draw down upon oneself His curses, and to seriously compromise one's eternal salvation.

\* \* \*

I could recall still further reasons for concern, but I prefer not to do so.

As I said above, I ardently hope that your founder was able to retract all his faults before rendering up his soul to God. Did he do so? We will find out on the Day of Judgement. Until then such knowledge will remain hidden with God.

On the other hand, we can and YOU MUST pray that the Archbishop did so. As you well know, it is never too late to offer up prayers to God.

I shall finish this letter, which you have placed me under the constraint of writing publicly to you, with a double warning.

FIRST - By continuing to commit the same errors as your founder, by trying to justify the unjustifiable, you can only increase his responsibility before God while in no way diminishing yours. Beyond this, in the name of that filial duty that you bear towards him, I ask that you reflect on the following :

You have the faith and you believe that, for the salvation of his soul, God might have taken account of the prayers and sacrifices which you would offer "post mortem." Under these circumstances, do you not think that you have a supplementary obligation to consider what I have written in my letter?

Unless you find yourselves capable of doctrinally refuting the reasons drawn from the faith on which our concern rests, do you not think that your filial duty places an obligation on you to overcome your reluctance to recognize that you, like him, have been mistaken? To do so is not to fail in one's filial duty. The recognition of paternal errors gives far better expression to such duty than becoming fixed in such errors.

SECOND – If the fate of your founder is irremediably fixed, yours and mine are not as yet determined. Now, with regard to our salvation, our differences of opinion are not matters of divergence, but of direct contradiction. To put it plainly, if you are on the right path to salvation, then I am not. And if I am correct, you are on the way to Gehenna. To once again refer to the passage in Ezechiel (III, 17-21), you have towards me, as I do towards you, a grave obligation in fraternal charity which you must exercise.

By writing a public letter to you, I believe I have more than adequately fulfilled this demand of charity. Will you have the courage to do the same with regard to me? In effect, one cannot believe in the sincerity of your convictions if you do not hold that I am necessarily on the way to damnation. Listen to what God says to you through his prophet: "Sanguinem vero ejus de manu tua requiram." (Ez. III, 20)[50]

I pray that the sweet and Immaculate Heart of Mary, that the great St. Joseph, virginal father of Jesus and principal Patron of the Church, will obtain for you from our Lord Jesus Christ the grace to prevent you from deluding yourselves about your easy success (meditate on Matt. VII, 22-23), that you may not become comfortable in your incoherence, that you may understand that God, who has allowed your errors in order that your conversion might be the more glorious for Him and the more profitable for the eternal salvation of your Founder.

Father Noel Barbara

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A LETTER TO FATHER COACHE, EDITOR OF "COMBAT DE LA FOI"

Dear Father,

In the beginning of the year 1988, I publicly informed the subscribers of "Forts dans La Foi" about your most fraternally charitable attitude towards me in my difficulty – this at a time when I was faced with a terrible trial. Since then, faithful in my friendships, I have abstained from raising in my review the issue of that attack which you have leveled on the true defenders of the faith. This is not because I lacked occasions to do so; you have provided me with many such in your journal "Combat de La Foi."

Your December 1991 issue arrived when my "Public Letter to the Members of the Society of Saint Pius X" was in press. You

have gone too far this time! In effect, as you are fully aware, I am among those that you, in your charity, habitually label as "extremists," and that you compare this time to "the Pharisees put in their place by Jesus."

I have tried to convince myself that you are unaware of the harm that you do in acting like this. Whatever it may be – only God and your confessor can know – I cannot continue to keep silent without feeling myself culpable of cowardice towards those whom you victimize, and of being a traitor to Our Lord. I therefore add this post-script especially for you and pray to God that you will have the courage to read it, to meditate upon it, and to profit from it.

You know, dear Father, that I have always worked towards the unity of those who would defend the faith. You know me well enough that you cannot be ignorant of my concern to never act without being able to provide a doctrinal justification for my action. Recall, for example, the first sacerdotal meeting that I arranged in Tours at the very beginning of our activities. At that time you were still at Montjavoult. You were present, along with Archbishop Lefebvre and many others. What were we looking for? Surely it was the doctrinal justification for our resistance.

As you well know, no union is possible, despite the best of intentions, without a preliminary agreement on the reasons that would motivate such a union.

It is once again in an attempt to work towards such unity that we have exchanged several letters in 1988. In each of your responses you changed the subject under consideration in order to avoid issues that embarrassed you. I even took you to task about this at the start of my letter of November 21. Allow me to quote from this letter: "Excuse my frankness, but you have the gift of exasperating me, for you give me the impression that you will go to almost any lengths to avoid the real problem in order not to have to deal with it. Be so kind as to tell me what the issue in our proposed meeting is that you find so difficult. Is it that of establishing the theological reasons which justify and indeed command our resistance?"

"I have taken great care to point out that when it is a matter of dealing with the highest religious authority in the world, namely the Vicar of Christ, to have an absolutely clear conscience, we must be able to justify our resistance by means of absolutely certain doctrine, and not just follow the opinion of some theologian, even if said opinion is well-founded and most probable of endorsement."

"For a long time now, I have been reproaching you in a friendly manner for stubbornly considering as opinions all the reasons advanced by those who refuse the authority of the popes of Vatican II."

Then I made two trips to Moulin du Pin. Even more than the pleasure I anticipated in visiting your beautiful estate, I wished, above all – you were fully aware of this, since I had said it in my letters – to discuss the question of the pope with you.

Should I remind you of this? Both times you avoided the discussion. For you, our divisions are not so much the result of different theological opinions, but of the desire of each group to impose their opinion on others, always claiming that said opinions are of faith. According to you, all that is required to end the divisions is that everyone adhere to traditional theology.

As Mr. de La Palice would have said, if this "a priori" position was not erroneous, it would be just. Unfortunately, it is erroneous.

First of all, can you indicate what traditional theologians have treated or even broached the problem which Vatican II poses for us?

Certainly, as long as one avoids precision, it is easy to invoke the traditional theology in order to resolve our problems. But are you capable of giving even a single pertinent reference?

Even though you search the Fathers with care, you will find nothing to help. The question never arose over the past centuries. Even those discussions about the possibility of a heretical or schismatic pope do not really deal with the problem posed by the popes of Vatican II. Neither among the traditional authors, nor among any others, has the case of the Church being subject for more than a quarter of a century to a modernist pope been considered. I am speaking of a pope who is at one and the same time a heretic, a schismatic and an apostate from the Catholic faith, of a pope who has fostered the placing of an idol on a tabernacle fixed to an altar in a consecrated church in order that sectarian adepts could pray for peace. Is this not what occurred at Assisi? Throughout the two thousand year history of the Church, what theologian has even thought about such a problem and can be called upon to clarify matters of this sort for us?

It follows, my dear confrere, that you are wrong. We are not divided only on opinions, we are divided also, and above all, on articles of faith. And I beg you not to think that you can rely on the procedures so dear to Archbishop Lefebvre, to the members of the Society and to all those liberals who burden the resistance with such phrases as "it is useless to talk to them because they are proud and always wish to be right." Let me state without hesitation that this affirmation is a lie coupled with cowardice, which our well known Jean de La Fontaine has immortalized in his fables. Remember the fox, vexed at his inability to reach the grapes: "They are too green, and only good for the `extremists'."

To be as brief as possible, I shall content myself with publicly posing several specific questions to you. I pray God that He will give you the strength and the light in order to enable you to answer them honestly, to justify your arguments by means of Magisterial texts and not by gratuitous affirmations, falsified quotations or those irrelevant to the issue. Read note 27 above. In writing it, I avoided naming you. Your latest article obliges me to inform my readers that this note concerns you as directly as Ogliastro-Laguerie, since, which I regret to have to say, you are used to behaving in this way.

THE FIRST QUESTION - TO USE YOUR OWN WORDS, IT DEALS WITH "THIS RIDICULOUS ARGUMENT ABOUT `UNA CUM'."

Personally, from the time of my ordination to the time that I became aware of the fall of Paul VI, I have always prayed the "Te igitur," holding to the sense which was taught to me in the seminary. I intend by means of this prayer to ask God, for the Holy Catholic Church, for which the Holy Sacrifice is primarily, "in primis," offered "that it may please Him to give her peace, to protect and govern her throughout the earth in unity with your servant our Pope X ... and our Bishop Y ... and with all those who profess the orthodox, Catholic and Apostolic faith."

Since I have become aware of the fact that these popes who have betrayed Christ cannot be true popes, I have adopted the directives which the Roman Missal gives for the situation in which the Holy See and the Episcopal See are vacant, and I simply omit the parts of the passage which are in italics.

The justification for my decision is quite simple. With the grace of God, I do not wish under any circumstances to befoul the sacrifice which I offer to God by naming in this solemn prayer the individual who is the principal adversary of Christ, the principal "antichrist," as Archbishop Lefebvre has

called him, the principal destructor of "the orthodox, Catholic and Apostolic faith."

Considering the importance of the issue of "una cum," an importance which seems to totally escape you, I shall try to give you a comparison which will perhaps make it clearer for you. I know that a comparison is not a reason, but, for souls of good will, a comparison can help to understand the reason.

Whatever sense you give to the phrase "una cum"[53], imagine, dear Father, a priest, a "good" priest, but one who is a little strange. He celebrates his Mass piously using the rite of Pius V, but wishing to pray for their conversion, he celebrates his Mass "una cum" Athenagoras (or Nicodim, or Roger Schutz of Taize, or Hassan of Morocco).

You can, at least I hope, without difficulty understand that the "good Mass" of this "holy priest," celebrated in the traditional and unquestionably valid rite, but offered to God "una cum" the leading schismatic (or with the Lutherans of Taize, or the disciples of Mohammed) is certainly tarnished with a sacrilegious smear, apart from the sense which the celebrant gives to the phrase "una cum."

Can you continue to find the quarrel about "una cum" ridiculous with regard to this rather peculiar priest whose manner of celebrating Mass cannot fail to cause some revulsion, even among those who adhere to the "traditional theology"?

And so, dear Father, can you now understand our real problem? This is where it can be found. With regard to orthodox Catholicism, what difference can you see between the faith of a schismatic, a heretic, a Mohammedan, the Dalai Lama or John Paul II? Personally I can see several, but all of them purely accidental. On the other hand, with regard to the substance of their faith, none of them, and John Paul II even less than the others, can be said, without lying to the Holy Spirit, to fall within the category of "omnibus orthodoxis atque catholicae et apostolicae fidei CULTORIBUS."

Of course this matter can seem ridiculous, but – pardon me for telling you this under my breath as it were – only to those who have lost all sense of the sanctity of the Catholic Mass. From the day of our ordination, by making us priests and confiding to us the power to offer the Holy Sacrifice, the Church has entrusted us with the perpetual obligation of always guarding, following the pertinent expression of Father Guerard des Lauriers, the "Oblatio munda" or pure Sacrifice.

If I should be in error in explaining the importance of

this "ridiculous question" to you, I count on your fraternal and sacerdotal charity to enlighten me from some Catholic source drawn from traditional theology and to show me those that Christ would consider as, "pharisees who need to be put in their place."

## THE SECOND QUESTION – THE NEW MASS

I have never denied, and I have always believed and taught that the authentic words of the two-fold consecration are both essential and sufficient to assure the validity of the Holy Sacrifice WHEN USED IN A CATHOLIC RITE. Thus it is useless to go over this issue again and again. To do so solves none of our difficulties and in fact distracts us from the real issue which is that of the new mass. Here again you give the impression that you do not understand. Allow me to again recall for your benefit that:

The new rites of Paul VI were put together from different sources with an obvious ecumenical intention. With this purpose in view, their authors wished to suppress everything in the traditional rite which UNEQUIVOCALLY signified Catholic doctrines that were repugnant to the majority of Protestants, such dogmas, to mention but a few of those considered essential, as the REAL PRESENCE of the Body of Christ after the consecration, THE PROPITIATORY NATURE OF THE SACRIFICE, and the NEED OF A VALIDLY ORDAINED PRIEST TO CELEBRATE.

The desired result was obtained. As you well know, the Superior Consistory of the Church of the Confession of Augsburg in Alsace and Lorraine had no hesitancy in letting everyone know this from the moment the new rite was promulgated. And ever since then the Protestants feel free to use these "new eucharistic prayers with which they feel at home." They have even admit the reasons why they find it acceptable. It is because "the Roman Church has dropped the notion of sacrifice."

With regard to the new mass, here is my question:

BY WHAT AUTHORITY DO YOU SUPPORT YOUR AFFIRMATION THAT A SACRAMENT (that of the Eucharist in the present instance) CONFECTED IN A RITE SPECIFICALLY CREATED IN ORDER TO NO LONGER EXPRESS IN AN UNEQUIVOCAL MANNER THE REALITIES THAT IT OUGHT TO PRODUCE (our eucharistic dogmas), IS NOT SUBJECT BY THIS VERY FACT TO ANY PERNICIOUS INFLUENCE AS TO ITS VALIDITY?

THIS IS THE CENTRAL ISSUE IN THE MASS OF PAUL VI AND NOTHING ELSE. AND YOU HAVE AFFIRMED THE SAME [I.E., THAT THE RITE DOES NOT INFLUENCE THE CONFECTION OF THE SACRAMENT] SINCE

ITS PUBLICATION. THIS IS PRECISELY THE ISSUE THAT HAS DIVIDED US.

You believe that provided the minister is ordained a priest and he pronounces the essential words, REGARDLESS OF THE FACT THAT THE RITE EXPRESSES A CONTRARY INTENTION, his mass is necessarily valid. In other words, FOR YOU THE EUCHARIST, CONFECTED IN THE NEW WAY, IS ALWAYS A SACRAMENT, BUT A SACRAMENT WHICH PRODUCES WHAT IT FAILS TO ANY LONGER SIGNIFY IN THE NEW RITE.

Which one of us, Father, has abandoned the traditional Catholic theology?

### THE THIRD QUESTION – THE POPES OF VATICAN II

Are they or are they not the Vicars of Christ? Are they or are they not invested with that Pontifical Authority which is essential to their function? Yes or no?

In the Gospel, Our Lord distinguished very clearly between SINFUL and FALSE PASTORS.

With regard to a sinful pastor, let us remember that Jesus taught us that HOWEVER SINFUL HE MAY BE, HE IS STILL A PASTOR. He remains seated in the Chair of Moses – now we would say the Chair of Peter – and is invested with the Authority of Christ.

THOUGH HE IS SINFUL, Christ assists him that he should not poison the faithful with false doctrines. The conclusion which imposes itself, and Jesus made it sufficiently clear that further discussion is not possible, is that WE MUST LISTEN TO HIM. In listening to him, we are listening to Christ. Unfortunately – the Master also said something else with equal clarity – WE MUST NOT IMITATE HIM. If his teaching is good, his conduct is not.

IN THE SITUATION WHERE WE FIND OURSELVES WITH A BAD PASTOR, WE HAVE NO REASON TO BE DISTURBED. THE MASTER HAS GIVEN US A CATHOLIC WAY OF CONDUCTING OURSELVES WHICH IS QUITE CLEAR. WE HAVE BUT TO REMEMBER WHAT HE SAID AND PUT IT INTO PRACTICE. "LISTEN TO THEM, BUT DO NOT IMITATE THEM FOR THEY SAY AND DO NOT." (Matt. XXIII, 2-3)

The FALSE PASTOR however is something else. The FALSE PASTOR, THE MERCENARY OR THE STRANGER is one to whom the sheep do not belong because the owner of the sheep has not entrusted them to him.

With regard to him, if we do not wish to be misled, we

must also follow the advice of the Master. As with the former situation it is clear and direct.

First of all we must understand that A FALSE PASTOR IS NOT A PASTOR AT ALL. Once again it is Jesus who teaches us this. He only appears as a pastor because he is covered in sheep's clothing. As such he can get into the sheepfold, but he is only there – and once again the Master assures us of this – he is only there to steal, to butcher, and to destroy.

Unlike the sinful pastor, the false pastor does just this. And Jesus did not give us the same advice with regard to this situation. What he told us to do with regard to a false pastor is neither complicated nor less effective than that which He told us with regard to the faults of a sinful pastor.

Jesus spoke about false pastors on two occasions. In Saint John, he was content to recall the NORMAL REACTION OF THE SHEEP IN HIS FOLD. They do not follow a stranger, but flee away from him. Why do they do this? The Master took great care to also point this out. Because they do not know the voice of strangers (John X, 5). IT IS THUS BY THE VOICE, which is to say BY THE TEACHING THAT THIS VOICE CONVEYS, THAT THOSE WHO ARE CHRIST'S SHEEP RECOGNIZE A FALSE PASTOR.

They can also recognize false pastors by another means: BY THE HAVOC WHICH THEY INEVITABLY WREAK. The only reason they enter the sheepfold is "to steal, to butcher and destroy." Once again, it is Jesus who warns us (Matt. VII, 15-16). And this second teaching is as clear and efficacious as the first: "By their fruits you shall know them."

After these indispensable explanations, HERE IS MY QUESTION WITH REGARD TO THE POPES OF VATICAN II. Do you rank them among SINFUL pastors, or among FALSE pastors?

Are they, in your opinion, to be ranked among popes like Alexander Borgia VI, to whom one could listen even with regard to the VIth and IXth commandments of God, but whom one should not imitate because he unfortunately in this and many other areas SAID BUT DID NOT DO?

On page 8 of your "Combat de la Foi," YOU RANK POPES WHO TEACH HERESY AMONG SINFUL PASTORS. Since such is the case with the popes of Vatican II, I feel entitled to think that you place them in this category. If such is the case, they continue to occupy the Chair of Peter. Unless you think that Jesus is wrong, you should hasten, along with all those who confidently follow you, to listen to these popes and to obey them by accepting the new mass, ecumenism, the new

ecclesiology, etc., etc., for they give an example by doing what they say.

Moreover, in so far as Jesus continues to assist a sinful pastor when he teaches, you should conclude that it is He who you listen to when you read "Catechesi Tradendae," "Redemptor Hominis," "Dignitatis Humanae," etc.

May God forgive me for even having dared to consider such a blasphemous supposition. I have only done it so as to adapt myself to the present situation, and to be "all things to all men."

If however you rank the popes of Vatican II among the false pastors, those who only appear to be pastors because they are covered in sheep skins, in virtue of what traditional theology do you have the right not to speak out with a loud and clear voice and let the entire world know that these popes are only popes in name, and that, dressed in sheep's clothing, they have only entered the sheepfold, which is to say the Holy Roman Church, for the purpose of stealing, butchering and destroying?

Father, I believe I have been both clear and charitable. I await your response with confidence.

Noel Barbara

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#### APPENDIX

The actual appendix consists of many letters, the purpose of which is to provide documentation for the text of the "Open Letter from Father Barbara to the Society of Saint Pius X." With Father Barbara's permission, I have not translated these letters. Those who are interested in them can obtain them through "Forts dans la Foi." However, Father Barbara did request that the following letter be translated and appended at the end of his "Open Letter."

This letter was sent to all the priests of the Society of Saint Pius X shortly after they had been sent the eleventh issue of "Forts dans la Foi." This issue and this letter were translated into their respective languages. Those who lived in Spanish and English-speaking countries also received it in their own language.

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FORTS DANS LA FOI

Tours, February 23, 1991

## LETTER TO ALL THE PRIESTS OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT PIUS X

Dear Father:

I have already sent you Issue No. 11 of "Forts dans la Foi." [54] I hope that you have received it and that you found it worthy of your attention. It is with regard to the issues it raised that I am now writing. I beg you to have the charity to read and respond my letter. I assure you that in writing, it is not my intention to embarrass you in any way.

You will note that the important aspect of number 8 is to be found in the distinction made on page 45. I do not believe I am mistaken in stating that the divisions which destroy the work of the Catholic resistance and scandalize both the faithful and members of the new Church come above all from the confusions which should be, but never have been cleared up.

If you take the trouble to think about it, you will see that this distinction is capital. It can put an end to our divisions and allow for a doctrinal agreement among us based on the minimum which is imposed by the faith (I have summarized this in the conclusion on page 15). It will also provide the resistance with that effective strength which it is seeking.

With regard to this agreement, allow me to quote the recommendation of St. Paul to the Corinthians. What he has to say, it seems to me, concerns all of us in a special way. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you." (I Cor. I, 10)

How can we come to all speak the same thing? How can we prevent schisms from arising among us? I can only see one way. That is a common and harmonious agreement which accepts for its guide the definite teaching of the Church.

When the LICRA [55] brought a false accusation against Archbishop Lefebvre, Jean Madiran wrote: (I quote from memory) "Totalitarian governments have replaced common agreement by repression." This always occurs when those who hold power find themselves unable to justify their decisions.

If we are to avoid such an arbitrary reproach, we must come to some common agreement. My letter has no other purpose than to bring this about.

In sending you No. 8 of our review, I have shared my thoughts with you in the clearest possible way. In return, I

would hope that you would share with me your thoughts about the following issues in an equally open manner:

1: THE PROBLEM which is at the basis of our resistance. Are you in agreement with my manner of stating this problem (page 8)? If not, how do you see it?

2: THE SOLUTION which the faith provides us with. Do you accept the argument which I have offered based on the text of St. Paul to the Romans (pp. 10-12). If not, where have I gone wrong?

3: THE RESPONSE which I have made to the usual objections (pages 13-14). Does this response appear satisfactory to you? If not, on what basis would you base your attempts to resolve the objection?

4: WITH REGARD TO SOME COMMON AGREEMENT. Are you willing to have a sacerdotal meeting to deal with these problems? What do you think of such an idea?

I would like to finish my letter by relating an instructive anecdote. I have frequently met with bishops that are holding office. The two most recent meetings were with Archbishop Honore of Tours and Bishop Hardy of Senlis. I had a discussion lasting two hours with each of them. At the end of these discussions I asked each of them: "Your Excellency, you know that I am a partisan of Tradition. One of the most traditional doctrines which I defend is that of filial submission to the Sovereign Pontiff. If, fully aware of this obligation, I nevertheless resist the formal orders of the popes of Vatican II, you should understand that, especially at my age, I should have very good reasons based on the faith for doing so. Since you are a member of the Episcopal body, could you not persuade your colleagues to appoint two or three of their body, or of their theologians, to examine my reasons in the light of the most certain teaching of the Church? It is possible that we are in error, and, your Excellency, if these doubts cannot be resolved, you should join us in our battle. Considering the fact that we have a soul to save, my request and hope is that you as pastors will not be indifferent with regard to our problem." The two bishops were agreeable, but after more than a year, and after a follow up letter, the episcopal conference were afraid to respond to my request. This refusal to come to any agreement among those who constantly proclaim their belief in dialogue allows us to come to some judgement about their good faith, if not about their faith in itself

Please excuse me, dear Father, for having taken so much of

your time. I impose on your sacerdotal spirit for the charity of response. In the interim, I offer you my most sincere greetings in Our Lord and Our Lady.

Father N. Barbara

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#### LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL SUBJECTS TREATED THESE LAST YEARS

- No. 1 - The hierarchical Church is infallible in her teaching
  - The issue of religious liberty
- No. 2 - The hierarchical Church is infallible in her teaching (second part)
  - Consideration of certain special problems
- No. 3 - The popes of Vatican II
- No. 4 - The visibility of the Church
  - The necessity for obedience in the Church Militant
- No. 5 - "Domesticos Fidei"
  - Two Doubts
  - The Catholic Resistance
- No. 6 - "'89" in the Church
  - Mgr. Lefebvre and witnessing to the faith
- No. 7 - What faith inspires the popes of Vatican II?  
Is John Paul II a Modernist?
  - Fighting the Good Fight
- No. 8 - The popes of Vatican II. The problem that they present.
  - The response of the faith
  - John XXIII
- No. 9 - The Salvation of non-Catholics
  - Obedience is the Best of All Possible Sacrifices
- No. 10/11 - The Anglican drama of the post-Conciliar clergy
  - Exposing the absence of authority in the new church

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PRE-"Open Letter" ENDNOTES:

[1] Only a Pope can appoint an individual whom he selects to govern a portion of the universal Church to the Apostolic College.

[2] Even Archbishop Lefebvre considered this to be the case. In an interview given to Michele Reboul and published in "Monde et Vie" on May 15, 1988, he stated: "But, if I were to consecrate a bishop without the indispensable authorization of the Pope, I would be schismatic."

[3] Epikeia is a restrictive interpretation that goes contrary to the letter of the law, but which one considers as equitable and conformable to the thought and intention of the legislator who did not foresee, as one thinks, the extraordinary circumstances in which one finds oneself in a given situation. (J. B. Vittrant, S.J., "Theologie morale," No. 64.) [One of the best discussions of Epikeia in the English Language is "The History, Nature and Use of EPIKEIA in Moral Theology," by the Rev. Lawrence Joseph Riley, A.b., S.T.L., published by The Catholic University of America Press (Studies in Sacred Theology, Second Series, No. 17), 1948.

[4] Cf. "Fortes in Fide," No. 8, The Solution to the Problem. Father Barbara endorses the "Cassiciacum" thesis of Guerard des Lauriers, which holds that the post-Conciliar "popes" are only materially, but not formally popes. He does this, not as a doctrine, but as a strongly held theological opinion.

[5] In all the crises which have ravaged the Church (Arianism, Monothelism, Protestantism, Anglicanism), with very rare exceptions, the clergy has generally sided with the power structure in order to avoid difficulties. If collegiality can not be established on scriptural grounds (consider Matt. XXVI, 43 and 56), it has a certain precedence in the history of the Church.

[6] It is a notorious fact that in the post-Conciliar Church, the validity of the new sacramental rites, especially those of the Mass and those related to Holy Orders, are, to say the least, OF DOUBTFUL VALIDITY. Several bishops, priests by the hundreds, and the faithful by the thousands refuse to attend or participate in the new mass. In order to gather them back into the fold, the authorities of the new church have granted those who make such demands the right to retain the ancient rite. IN SO DOING THEY ARE GIVING RECOGNITION TO THE FACT THAT THE DOUBTS ABOUT THE VALIDITY OF THE NEW RITES ARE BASED ON REALITY.

[7] Some have claimed that the Holy Sacrifice must cease to exist at the end of time. However, this is not an argument that prevents us from presuming an apostolic mandate. To believe this is to place oneself in opposition to the designs of God who has allowed these new invalid rites precisely in order that the prophecies regarding the cessation of the Sacrifice might be realized.

This objection cannot be sustained. In point of fact, if one were to admit this supposition to be correct, namely the usage of invalid rites which leads to the cessation of the true sacrifice and its substitution by an invalid synaxe, we are faced with something very evil. Without doubt God, who permits sin can allow for this. But, one is not allowed to do evil, even to accomplish the permissive will of God (Rom. III, 8). One cannot collaborate with such actions or even fail to obstruct them as much as is within one's power. It follows that those who argue against the presumption of an apostolic mandate on such grounds commit a grave sin.

[8] On May 8, 1979, in a Declaration which was widely promulgated even among the general public, Archbishop Lefebvre made it known that anyone, "be he priest, brother, religious or oblate" who refused to recognize the legitimacy of John Paul II and to name him in the Canon of the Mass would be excluded from his Fraternity.

This decision is still in force. In July 1991 the German review "Einsicht" published a letter of Father SCHMIDBERGER, the Superior General of the Society, dated May 28, 1991. In this letter he stated, "WE FIRMLY BELIEVE, AS WE ALWAYS HAVE, THAT JOHN PAUL II IS THE LEGITIMATELY REIGNING POPE WHICH IS

WHY WE PRAY FOR HIM IN THE CANON OF THE MASS. This position is obligatory on all the members of the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X."

[9] We draw upon the "Note sur l'episcopat" edited by Father H. Belmont.

[10] Literally, "its transmission tends by nature to the establishment of the ecclesiastical hierarchy."

[11] This was called by Bishop Guerard des Lauriers, the "minimized episcopacy" ("episcopat diminue").

[12] Cf. Note 2, p. 14.

[13] This is true whether they belong to the "official church," the Fraternity of St. Peter, or the Society of Saint Pius X.

[14] "Una cum". A true pope is "one hierarchical person with Christ."

(15) "Una cum."

(\*) This page number is from the French issue of "Fortes in Fide" ("Forts Dans la Foi") Those two witnesses have not been translated for the English edition.

[16] "To err is human. What is diabolical is to persist in error once one is aware of it." As for the reward for paying the price, Our Lord has told us "Veritas liberabit vos: the truth will make you free." (John VIII, 32)

[17] This Patriarchate, while declaring itself to be in submission to the Pope, refused to obey him. In the Encyclical "Quae in Patriarchate" (January 9, 1876) Pius IX addressed the clergy and the faithful of the Chaldean rite. The Pope explained, "What good does it do to proudly recognize the supremacy of Peter and his successors? Of what benefit is it to frequently repeat declarations of the Catholic faith and obedience to the Apostolic See, when these fine words are contradicted by one's actions?" (Cf. Solesmes, "L'Eglise," T. 1, No. 433-434).

[18] [Footnote 18 was inadvertently skipped in the original.]

[19] A FORMAL sin presupposes the sinner is responsible. Apart from a public avowal that he is culpable of said sin, surely to declare that a given person is guilty of formal heresy or schism is to judge his conscience.

Generally such is the case. This is why the Lord said: "Do not judge lest you be judged." On the other hand, every time that an evil act is publicly accomplished in full freedom, an act that as such normally would manifest the will of the person responsible, it is not temerarious to judge of it. Under such circumstances judgement is not only permitted, but commended. The Master said with regard to this situation "You shall know them by their fruits." Such is the case of P.E.M. Comte de Labat d'Arnoux, Jean Laborie, Roger Kozik, Michel Fernandez, and Christian Datessen.

[20] It is most unfortunate that during the course of my visit with him or on the receipt of my letter of June 1, 1988 (this letter, which has been published in the French issue, has not been translated for "Fortes in Fide") Archbishop Ngo did not state that he refused to recognize John Paul II as pope. Why did he not do so?

[21] Father R. P. Guerard des Lauriers was the principle editor of the "Brief Critical Examination," otherwise incorrectly known as "The Ottaviani Intervention." He was the first to establish that "the new rite [the "novus ordo"] deviates in an impressive manner, both in its entirety and in its details, from the Catholic Theology of the Mass such as was defined in the XXIIth session of the Council of Trent."

Father Moises Carmona, the cure of Acapulco in Mexico, belonged to the P.E.R.C. (Cf. "Open Letter to the Society of Pius X," note 37 p. 83). He had struggled along with us and Father R. P. Saenz y Arriaga from the beginning of the Catholic resistance, ABOVE ALL TO PRESERVE THE RITE OF THE MASS AS CODIFIED BY SAINT PIUS V. Both of them had been excommunicated by the new Church for having translated and distributed in Spanish my study on "The Heresy, Schism and Apostasy of Paul VI."

[22] The repentant heretic or schismatic can, like any kind of sinner, be absolved IN THE INTERNAL FORUM. He can so be reconciled with God and assured of his salvation. But for THE EXERCISE of holy orders HE MUST BE RECONCILED IN THE EXTERNAL FORUM. IN THE ABSENCE OF A RESIDENTIAL CATHOLIC BISHOP THERE IS NO AUTHORITY THAT CAN ABSOLVE IN THE EXTERNAL FORUM. As a result, he cannot exercise any function of orders with the exception of absolution given "in articulo mortis," in the danger of death.

[23] This is a constant practice in the sects. To cite but four cases, Cantor, in Rouen, Enos in the region of Paris, Laborie in Toulouse and Cannivet in the region of Lyon. All these were consecrated at least three times. Canivet, who has satanic connections, has been consecrated no less than seven

times.

[24] For example, Jean Oliveres de Mamistra who is married and who ordains married men. This official break with the entire legislation of the Church is a schismatic act.

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"Open Letter" ENDNOTES:

[1] Even though this letter is not specifically sent to the editor of "Combat de la Foi," it also concerns him as I shall explain in the added section, page 98.

[2] Father Aulagnier, in a postscript to a letter written to me on 11.8, said, "I take this opportunity to thank you for the letters of support which you addressed to Mgr. Lefebvre with regard to the historic event, the consecrations."

[3] In order to encourage you to accept the idea of a meeting for doctrinal study in order to resolve the problems between us other than in public discourse, I tried to make contact with the Dominicans of Fanjeaux. I thought that if I could convince them of the seriousness of the situation in which the Archbishop had placed them, they would be able to intercede with him and induce him to accept my proposal.

Unfortunately, your followers are more sectarian than yourselves. Under the pretext of "not troubling the recollection of our sisters," Mother Anne-Marie Simoulin, prioress general, refused to receive me, if only to listen to what I wished to ask her, "aware of the fact that she would be incapable of giving us any assistance at all."

[4] In "Fortes in Fide," No. 8. This number was translated into Spanish and Dutch.

[5] A copy of this letter will be found at the end of this open letter in the Appendix, p. 107.

[6] Translator's note: i.e., having attempted to show them their error, no further responsibility to debate with them would exist.

[7] Good faith is a quality of a person who acts with the certitude that he is correct. The most clear proof of one's good faith is the habitual disposition to justify one's reasons. The systematic refusal to provide such a justification allows one to doubt the good faith and the honesty of those who remain obstinate in this refusal.

[8] "Unam Sanctam," 18 November, 1302, Denzinger No. 469.

[9] "Mortalium Animos," 6 January, 1928. Translation available from many sources, including "The Papal Encyclicals," ed. Carlen, Consortium Books.

[10] There is also the possible explanation provided to me by Father Francis Laisney, former Superior of the U.S.A. district of your Society: "the distinction between submission and obedience." According to him, subordinates can disobey even while submitting to the pope. What escapes my learned correspondent is not only the fact that his thesis resembles a squared circle, but that his distinction is purely imaginary. Moreover this presumes the legitimacy of free-examination in the case of the popes of Vatican II. In effect, he holds that even when these popes are acting within their legitimate domain, the faithful should judge their decisions in order to know if they are orthodox or not in order to decide whether to obey or resist them.

[11] "We firmly believe, both before and after, that John Paul II is the true and legitimate pope for whom we uniformly pray in the Canon of the Mass. All the members of the priestly Society of Saint Pius X are obliged to agree with this." (Letter of Father Schmidberger, Superior General of the Society, published in the Gerinan review "Einsicht," July 1991).

[12] The means that have an effect on the nature or the ends of a society are not free means. The chief has the obligation to set aside or adopt means according to whether they alter or favor the nature and the ends of the society in question. To refuse a necessary means is to refuse to safeguard the inviolable nature of the society or to pursue the ends for which the society was established.

[13] Called the "good thing" in the currently available Douay Rheims version, but the "good depositum" in the original 1582 translation.

[14] To admit that subjects have the right to pick and choose from among the orders they receive is to destroy the very essence of obedience. If such is the case, the subject does not submit himself to the will of the superior in so far as the superior is the representative of God, but rather to his own will. In fact, he only does what pleases him, what he judges to be good and opportune. Conditional obedience is nothing other than insubordination practiced in a systematic manner.

With regard to the necessity of obedience in the Church militant, the reader is referred to "Fortes in Fide," No. 4, p.

9.

[15] Far from being fearful of papal infallibility, we should thank God for having wished its definition before the actual crisis arose. When it comes to the faith, this dogma is literally a "life-saver" that one can hang on to in order to avoid drowning. In point of fact, a church which might have been so seriously in error as to require the updating of Vatican II could never be divine. It could only be of human origin, for "Thus spoke the Lord: Cursed be the man who confides in man." (Jer. XVII, 5) But our faith assures us that the holy Catholic Church is divine. She is infallible. By means of this dogma and this dogma alone, we can uncover the imposters of Vatican II.

[16] An excellent translation by Father Anthony Cekada of this important document is available from Tan Books and Publishers (Rockford, IL., 61105) under the title of "The Ottaviani Intervention."

[17] In your publications you have brought up and propagated all the objections formulated against this dogma by those who opposed its definition at Vatican I.

[18] Like your founder, you sententiously pretend to be in communion with the "Catholic John Paul II" and not with "John Paul II the antichrist." Can you show us this "Catholic John Paul II" with whom you are in communion? Is this not the same individual who is at the same time also the responsible author of all the official acts of the Holy See, of the reunion at Assisi, of the visit to the synagogue in Rome, and of all the other scandalous actions and declarations of his pontificate? On what grounds can you distinguish between "John Paul II the antichrist" and "John Paul II, the Vicar of Christ?" As the Master said, "He that is not with me is against me" (Matt. XII, 30).

Do not think that you can avoid the issue by the facile solutions you offer your followers: "Each time that he is in agreement with Tradition, he is the pope. When he is not, he is the antichrist." This principle of "free examination" does not resolve but rather compounds the difficulty. For in effect, who has made you the judges of this conformity? Is not the Pope infallible precisely in order to maintain throughout every age ("tradere," to transmit) the precious deposit without error? Have you never heard of the expression attributed to Pius IX: "La Tradition, c'est moi.?" If you pause to consider this witticism, you will find in it great truth. Is not the reigning Pope the continuer of Tradition without any break?

[19] Normally, when a Pope speaks to the faithful, he does not

do so just to hear his own voice. If he does so, it is because he intends to expound to them the divinely revealed teaching in order that they might believe. And the only reason that the faithful listen to him is because they take him seriously. This is because they believe in the function of the Pope and are convinced that when they listen to him, they are listening to Christ Himself. (Read Luke X, 16)

[20] Father Barbara is responsible for the emphasizing capitals.

[21] This is why a pope goes to confession periodically.

[22] In the last analysis, the Pope is only a minister in the hands of God, an instrument endowed with liberty. As is the case with a simple priest, it is always the Man-God who produces the supernatural effects of his ministry, and this is why with regard to these effects the state of his soul is without importance.

[23] I say, "among other things," because Paul VI placed himself in contradiction with the teaching of the Church not only with regard to religious liberty, but also with regard to the salvation of those outside the Church, to the identity of the Catholic Church with the Mystical Body of Christ, and to the teaching about the nature of the Mass such as was defined at the Council of Trent, etc.

[24] It is our duty, as St. Peter wished, to remind the faithful who do not ask us for more that such is necessary. "Be always ready to respond in your defence to anyone who asks you to give account of your hope." (I Peter, III, 15)

[25] In your official publication, "Lettre aux Amis et Bienfaiteurs," your Superior General, Father Schmidberger, has perfected this technique, expressing himself in terms which are as facile as they are sterile. Before the tribunal of God, such jeremiads will manifest your culpability.

[26] To admit the good faith of those who hold the key positions in the new church (pope, cardinals, patriarchs and bishops) despite the fact that for over 20 years they have made it abundantly clear that they have broken with the Catholic faith is nothing else but to recognize that the gates of hell can prevail against the Church.

[27] I have just received the January 1992 issue of "Le Chardonnet" (which is a publication supporting the Society of Pius X's position). I read there on page 2 the citations gathered together by Jacques Ogliastro on obedience. I do not

know this individual, but I know Father Philippe Laguerie and I know that the article of Mr. Ogliastro was published under his supervision and with his approval. I am sorry to have to once again point out that the process employed here is not honest. One must not quote a text which is not relevant to the matter under discussion. One must not quote it to prove the opposite to what the author of the citation intended. What is one to think when the citations you use are shortened so that they appear to say the opposite of what their author intended?

J. Ogliastro starts out this time by quoting Leo XIII's Encyclical "Diuturnum Illud." In this text the pope recognizes "a single valid reason for refusing obedience; and this is in the situation where the command is contrary to either natural or divine law." He gives an example which justifies this: "for a prince whose will is in opposition to the will and the laws of God ... "

Of what kind of princes is Leo XIII speaking? He is speaking specifically of temporal princes. In point of fact, the entire Encyclical, as its title indicates, deals with the matter of the origin of civil powers ("De potestatis civilis origine"), as Ogliastro was careful not to point out. That's no problem to him. In order to have the pope say what he wished him to say, Ogliastro added a clause which was entirely his own invention. And the readers of "Le Chardonnet," who have placed their confidence in a publication under the supervision of Father Laguerie, read: "For the princes (WHICH CERTAINLY INCLUDES THE PRINCES OF THE CHURCH) whose will ... "

Next to be quoted is Cardinal Journet. In the text which he cites, Ogliastro noted a sentence which expresses a position contrary to what he wished the words to say. This doesn't bother him. He simply deletes the sentence in question and once again, the readers of "Le Chardonnet" are left in ignorance.

Let me quote the reconstituted passage from Cardinal Journet with the pertinent passages he omitted in brackets with bold print.

"Regardless of whether the issue is theological or moral, obedience should never be blind. It should always be a matter of conscience and should always be enlightened by prudence. But the end which prudence has in mind is not always the same. [IN THE CASE OF THOSE TRUTHS WHICH ARE INFALLIBLY GUARANTEED AS ABSOLUTE AND IRREVOCABLE, AND IN THE CASE OF GENERAL LAWS WHICH ARE INFALLIBLY GUARANTEED AS BEING PRUDENT, PRUDENCE HAS NO ROLE TO PLAY ABOUT THE VALUE OF SUCH DIRECTIVES IN THEMSELVES: HOW CAN IT DELIBERATE ABOUT THE JUSTICE OF DIRECTIVES WHICH ARE INFALLIBLY GUARANTEED? PRUDENCE ONLY PERTAINS TO THE VALUE THESE DIRECTIVES HAVE FOR ME; IN WHAT MANNER I SHOULD PERSONALLY GUIDE MYSELF AS TO HOW I SHOULD APPLY THEM "HIC ET NUNC" (HERE AND NOW) IN MY CONCRETE DAILY LIFE. BUT] in the case of directives only guaranteed in a fallible manner, the

scope of prudence is very large, even to the matter of the value of those directives in themselves. Certainly this does not mean that it should debate with legitimate powers about the legitimacy of their mission or attempt to deny such authority: that would be insanity. But when there are serious reasons for doing so in order to assure the credibility "hic et nunc" of said authority, and especially when this is in doubt."

Ogliastro and Father Laguerie do not seem to have understood the quotation which they have taken from Cardinal Journet. Thus it is to them that I particularly address myself at this point.

As I have often explained, and as I did once again in this article, the problem which the popes of Vatican II pose for the Catholic conscience is without precedent. It strikes at the very heart of the faith. It consists of the fact that in order to keep the faith, we must resist these popes with regard to truths infallibly guaranteed as absolute and irrevocable, and also with regard to the general laws infallibly guaranteed as being prudent. It would be absolutely impossible for a Catholic to conceive of such a situation arising with a true pope, a pope invested with the Authority of Peter. To once more quote the Cardinal, how is it possible to debate about the justice of directives which are infallibly guaranteed?

I will go farther. Let us suppose, as your Society does without being able to prove it, that the decisions which you are opposed to were "ONLY GUARANTEED IN A FALLIBLE MANNER."

Then, as Journet says, "THE SCOPE OF PRUDENCE IS VERY LARGE, EVEN TO THE MATTER OF THE VALUE OF THOSE DIRECTIVES IN THEMSELVES." "BUT," he points out, "NOT TO CONTEST WITH LEGITIMATE POWERS ABOUT THE LEGITIMACY OF THEIR MISSION OR ATTEMPT TO DENY SUCH AUTHORITY: THAT WOULD BE INSANITY."

Contrary to what you attempt to insinuate in "Le Chardonnet," this text in no way concerns the defence of our position. The Cardinal, who knew his Catholic theology a little better than teachers at Ecône, never imagined that a pope would be able to teach error in an area in which he was infallible. What he has to say, if you read his text with care, is that it would be crazy to even think of such a contradiction. On the contrary, THIS TEXT CONDEMNS THE CONDUCT OF YOUR SOCIETY, for you not only contest the value of directives which you refuse to obey; you commit the folly of contesting with the very power which you claim to be legitimate about the legitimacy of his mission, and, in refusing to submit to his formal orders, you deny his authority. To do so is insane and not only because Cardinal Journet has said so.

Finally, in a section that follows that just cited, Journet makes it clear that "on the level where the divine assistance which supports these authorities becomes fallible, and on the points which God can let them fall into error if they wish, the Catholic conscience becomes painfully torn; but

if it remains Catholic, such distress can be beneficial ... "

What are the "points which God can allow these authorities to err in if they wish," and where "the Catholic conscience can be painfully torn?" The Cardinal indicates some of them at the bottom of page 933 ("Eglise du Verbe incarné," T. II) and you carefully avoided to point them out.

You Father Laguerie should be ashamed too of giving the readers of your review to understand that the cases which are in consideration in these quotations are the same as that of the popes of Vatican II, for it is you who have the responsibility for having allowed Mr. Ogliastro to act in this manner with regard to them.

[28] Translator's note: A true pope is the spokesman of the infallible Magisterium, or more precisely, when he speaks "ex cathedra," which is to say, within his proper sphere and function as pope, he gives expression to the infallible Magisterium.

[29] Each of these Conciliar documents carries, before the signatures of the Fathers of the council which authenticated them, the following statement: "Haec omnia et singula quae in hac Declaratione (Constitutione, Decreto) edicta sunt, placuerunt Sacrosancti Concilii Patribus. Et Nos, Apostolica a Christo Nobis tradita potestate, illa, UNA CUM VENERABILIBUS PATRIBUS, in Spiritu Sancto approbamus, decernimus ac statuimus et quae ita synodaliter statuta sunt ad Dei gloriam promulgari jubemus. Romae, apud S. Petrum die ... Ego PAULUS Catholicae Ecclesia, Episcopus." ("Constitutiones Oecumenicum Concilium Vaticanum II" Typis polyglottis Vaticanis - MCMLXVI).

"Everything and each of the things which have been promulgated in this Declaration (Decree, Constitution) has pleased the Fathers of the Council. And we, in virtue of our apostolic power which we hold from Jesus Christ, IN UNION WITH THE VENERABLE FATHERS, we approve, establish and decree them in the Holy Spirit, and we order that for the glory of God that what has been established in conciliar manner be promulgated. Rome, close to St. Peters ... I myself, PAUL, a bishop of the Catholic Church." (Documents of Vatican II, St. Augustine Edition, Saint-Maurice, Switzerland, 1967)

[30] Here is how I explain this doctrine to the simple faithful who attend our chapels.

I tell them: Imagine two hosts, one of which is consecrated and the other of which is not; one cannot distinguish which of them is the Body of Christ. Despite this, there is a substantial difference between the two hosts, since one is the Body of Christ and the other is not. If one could see this "presence," it would be easy to distinguish between them. But unfortunately it is not possible to see the Real

Presence [with bodily eyes]. Now (this is only by way of comparison) imagine two popes, only one of whom is truly and really pope. Properly elected and accepted by Christ as His Vicar, he has been invested with His Authority. The other, for some reason which escapes us, even though he was properly elected, was not accepted by Christ as His Vicar and has not been invested with His Authority. One cannot see the Authority of Christ invested in the individual whom he has accepted as His Vicar any more than one can see the Real Presence in the consecrated host. Only God, to whom all things are known, can see the presence of His Son in the consecrated host and the investiture with Authority of His chosen Vicar. Since God sees which pope is invested with the Authority of His Son, and which "pope" is not, if He commands us to resist the false pope, He assures us that, despite all appearances to the contrary, that said individual is not a true pope, that he does not possess Christ's Authority, and that he has not been accepted as His Vicar.

[31] Father Calmel, O.P., "Itinéraires," No. 173, May 1973, pp. 79-80.

[32] The use of the word "all" is inexact, for he did not break with all his predecessors, but only with his pre-Vatican II predecessors.

[33] He who is elected at a conclave, and "who, despite his election is not a true successor of Peter" is, to use an expression of Guerard des Lauriers, only a "material pope." It is ironic that Mgr. Lefebvre was a "Guerardien" without suspecting it.

[34] I add the following note for the sake of Father Franz Schmidberger. You should also recall, Reverend Superior General, what your predecessor wrote during his moments of lucidity: "If it appears impossible, as is affirmed by Progressives and those who blindly follow Paul VI, that Pope Paul VI is truly pope and at the same time favors heresy, and, as a result, if it appears that, contrary to the promises made by our Lord Jesus Christ, a pope can be profoundly liberal, then it seems that one must adopt the first hypothesis (namely the "sedevacantist" position). But this does not seem to be the case."

After the Assisi scandal, after the scandal which occurred in the synagogue of Rome, after all those scandals reported in the book entitled "Peter, Lovest Thou Me?," if all this does not make the issue clear to you, excuse me if I put it bluntly, but I see no explanation for your blindness other than the well-established rumor about you that circulates within the Society to the effect that you have infiltrated into the

Traditional movement in order to lead Ecône into the new church.

[35] Only invincible ignorance could excuse some of you from responsibility. But when it is a matter of the obligations of one's station in life (the study of doctrine is part of the duties incumbent upon a priest), or the respect due to the rights of others (specifically, the rights of the reigning pope), one cannot invoke this excuse. This is even more true when one obstinately disregards opinions which go against those one holds.

As for the faithful who have been drawn into your misguided ways, their responsibility is unquestionably less. But they also are not without fault. Apart from those who in moral theology are termed the "rudes" because they do not have the ability to understand the crisis, most of the faithful who have chosen to follow you are capable of knowing better. To what degree will the scandalous nature of your behavior excuse their sin? Like us, they will find out on the Day of Judgement.

[36] "L'Heresie du XXe Siecle," Nouvelles Editions Latines, 1, rue Palatine, 75006 Paris. Not available in English.

[37] Pro Ecclesia Romana Catholica.

[38] Mouvement de la Jeunesse Catholique Francaise (French Catholic Youth Movement). One of the two founders of this movement was ordained and is now the Prior of the Convent de La Haye aux Bonshommes in Avrille, France. During a railroad strike which resulted in his staying in Tours for a period of four hours, I had the opportunity to meet with him. During the course of this meeting, he told me "innocently": "If I properly understand you, the issue of the pope is for you a matter of the faith!" I was completely taken aback! The striking thing about all this is that this "good Father Innocent" is the spiritual director of numerous Dominican nuns. Let us pray, in the interest of those he directs, that before he dies, before it is too late, he will seriously consider the advice of Our Lord as is found in Matthew XV, 14.

[39] Shortly after the publication of this Declaration, the Union pour la Fidelite sent a tract to the subscribers of "Forts dans la Foi." The first paragraph of this supplement stated: "The climate of ralliement (compromise) created after the election of John Paul II presented us with a new situation, but this was transformed into a crisis when Archbishop Lefebvre publicly took the position that John Paul II was a legitimate pope and the new Novus Ordo, when said properly, was unquestionably valid - insisting that both doctrines were

obligatory for the members of the Society of Saint Pius X. (Fideliter, No. 13) This public stand was commented on and aggravated by Dom Gerard, Benedictine prior of Bedoin, and used by Monseigneur Ducaud-Bourget in his increasingly violent sermons against the "extremists." Since then there has been a veritable "search for witches." Alarming news comes from the seminaries, religious houses and Catholic schools. Anyone who dares to raise doubts about John Paul II is immediately considered schismatic and treated as a pariah.

[40] It is his desire to be recognized by the new church that explains the appointment of Father Franz Schmidberger to the position of Superior General of your Society.

Everyone thought your founder would designate Father Paul Aulagnier. His long-standing dedication to the cause, his devotion and filial affection for the Archbishop, and his enterprising and organizing abilities made him the natural choice. His appointment would have surprised no one.

For what reason was the choice of Mgr. Lefebvre deflected from him to Father Schmidberger?

For no other reason than his desire to see his Society accepted by Rome. The Director of the German Seminary of the Society in Weissbad appeared in his eyes as a providential gift.

This individual was the person who could bring the dialogue with the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to a fruitful conclusion.

It is a fact that both Father Schmidberger and Cardinal Ratzinger are German. They both tend to think alike. The new Church is far from being Thomist; Father Schmidberger is without exaggeration of similar views. As you know, during his seminary days at Ecône, he was dispensed from the course in philosophy. This former student of Professor Lauth had a philosophical formation which was rather "idealist." Such a background would make it easier for him to understand the Cardinal. And finally, when Ratzinger was Archbishop of Munich, Father Schmidberger had won his favour at the expense of a member of the Society.

At that time Fr. Wodsack was the district Superior for Germany and lived in Munich. When Ratzinger was named archbishop, Father Wodsack gathered together a collection of heretical phrases drawn from Ratzinger's works and distributed tracts so freely throughout the city that even the newspapers commented on it.

Father Schmidberger, who was at that time the director of the German seminary at Weissbad, thought that he had gone too far. On his own, without consulting with his Superior, Father Wodsack, he went to and was received by Archbishop Ratzinger, and apologized for the tracts.

Finally, on the 19th of March which followed his

appointment as Superior General, Father Schmidberger took advantage of the feast day of his patron saint to send flowers to Cardinal Ratzinger who had become the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome.

[41] To cite some examples: Religious Liberty was condemned by Gregory XVI in "Mirari Vos," and by Pius IX in "Quanta Cura;" Ecumenism by an Apostolic Letter of Pius VIII, by the Encyclical "Summo Jugiter" of Gregory XVI and by Pius XI in "Mortalium Animos;" the new ecclesiology was condemned by Pius XII in "Mystici Corporis Christi," etc., etc.

[42] Encyclical "Humani Generis," Denzinger 2313. Bold emphasis is that of Father Barbara.

[43] "Man sees what is obvious, but God scrutinizes the heart." (I Kings, XVI, 7)

[44] Only say good things about the dead.

[45] "By the abomination of desolation one can understand the corruption of doctrine when we see such established in the holy place, which is to say the Church." (Roman Breviary, Homily of St. Jerome, Last Sunday after Pentecost).

[47] For what other reason did you open a liberal Mass center in a place where there was already a flourishing center of true Catholic resistance to Vatican II, as for example in Tours and Nantes, to name but two of many? Was this motivated by a zeal for the glory of God? Or perhaps to bear a better witness to the Catholic faith? Or was it to attract the good will of those from whom you were soliciting permission to make a trial of Tradition?

[48] I lay the responsibility at his door for leading Father Augustine, Dom Gerard and their community, Father Bising and all those who joined the Fraternity of St. Peter into the camp of the enemy.

[49] The prayers and sacrifices which we offer to God after the death of a dear one do not have the power to change the judgement which God has already rendered. The particular judgement which follows everyone's death is definitive. But God knows the future as well as the present. He can take account of the prayers and sacrifices which will be offered up to Him for the benefit of a person and, because of them, at the last moment, give this dying individual the grace of conversion that he would not have without these prayers and sacrifices.

[50] Truly, I shall demand his blood from your hands.

[52] "In primis, quae tibi offerimus pro Ecclesia tua sancta catholica: quam pacificare, custodire, adunare, et regere digneris toto orbe terrarum: una cum famulo tuo Papa nostro N... et Antistite nostro N... et omnibus orthodoxis, atque catholicae et apostolicae fide cultoribus."

[53] If you prefer, consider note 28. You will see that Paul VI closed each of the official documents of Vatican II by using the expression UNA CUM, in its most obvious meaning. The Editions Saint Augustine have rendered this by the most appropriate expression: IN UNION WITH.

[54] The text of Number 11 of "Forts dans la Foi" corresponds to the Number 8 of "Fortes in Fide."

[55] Sigla of Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et l'Antisemitisme.

[Insert graphic "joseph.tif"]